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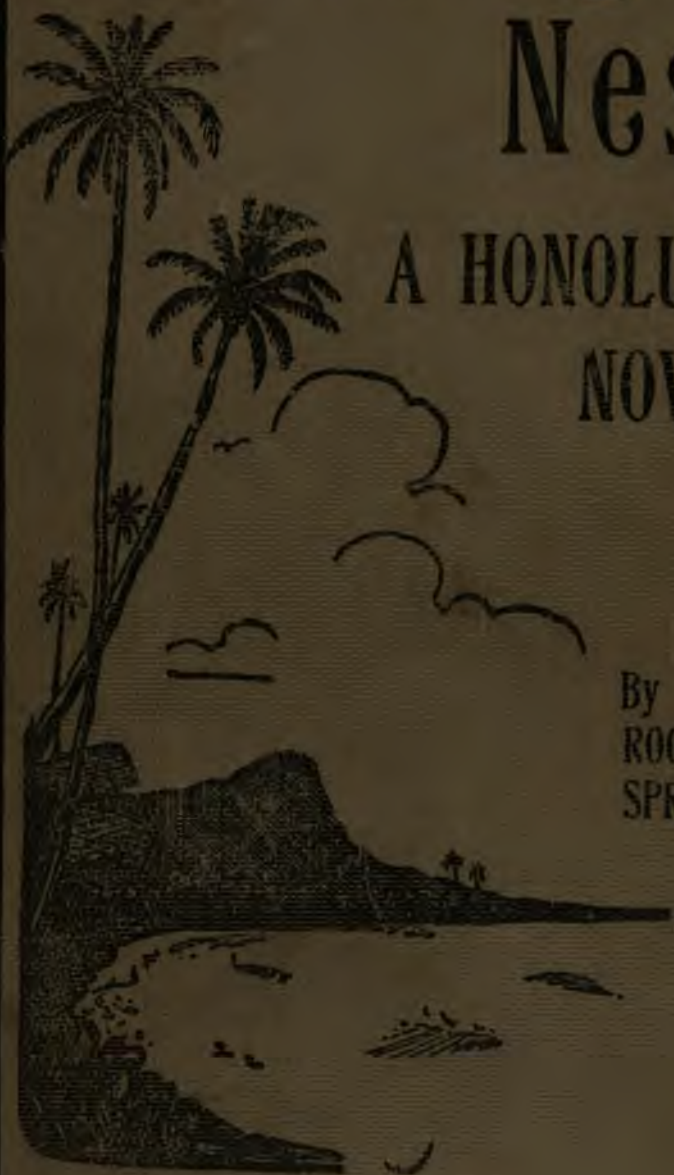
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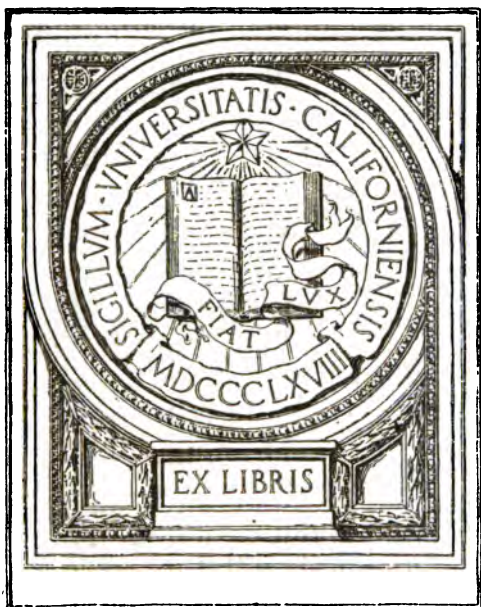
The Flamingo's Nest

A HONOLULU
NOVEL

By
ROGER
SPRAGUE



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THE FLAMINGO'S NEST



THE FLAMINGO'S NEST

A Honolulu Story

BY
ROGER SPRAGUE

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1917

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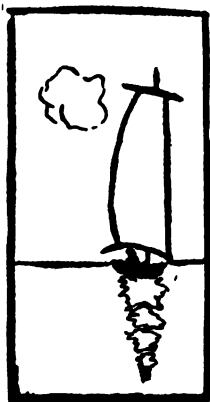
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NO. 1110
ALPHABETICAL

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FOREWORD

Most of the local color in this story is photographic. But the Crossroads and Cosmos Clubs do not exist; the X Sugar Company is fiction, not fact; and liberties have been taken with the territorial Capitol—some features altered, others added free gratis. Nor can the story be taken as a brief in favor of the hero's rather eccentric business methods. All characters and incidents are fictitious, and no statement refers to any person or company.

Time of the story: April, 1913.

R. S.

In the Hawaiian Islands—

Land of smoldering volcanoes and mixed races,

**Where the most primitive conditions linger beside the
most modern,**

And methods match conditions.

THE FLAMINGO'S NEST

I

ON BOARD THE STEAMSHIP NEVADA

Stately Island liner steering toward Hawaii,
Steaming where the coral grows and sunshine glares,
For a cargo of sugar,
Bananas, pineapples,
Cocoanuts and copra and alligator-pears.

With apologies to John Massfield

THE Royal Palm liner "Nevada," westward bound from San Francisco to Honolulu and Japan, plunged through the waves at the rate of eighteen knots an hour, a modern hotel driven by steam across the blue spaces of the Pacific. The day was dazzlingly bright—a brilliant tropical morning. In the dancing light the steamship made a spirited picture, with its twin red funnels and high straight stem and a string of gaudy signal-flags fluttering indigo and white and yellow. The sun flashed fire from the brass ports studding the liner's black sides. Along the boat-deck white canvas awnings were stretched where passengers lounged in lazy deck-chairs that trembled to the vibration from the drive of the triple turbines. The throb of the engines, the rumble of the propellers, the rhythmic rise and fall of the long steel hull as it rode the seas, all spoke of speed and progress, which were hurrying them on toward the trade-winds and tropical color of the Hawaiian Islands.

Already the ship had come more than two thousand miles from the mainland.

For an hour Hawaii had been in sight. In plain view lay an island where the waves were streaming toward a shore fringed with the vivid green of palm groves and the ragged outlines of volcanic rocks.

Among those who were looking toward the land, no one stared more intently than Kenneth Crane. He rose from his chair and crossed the deck to the ship's rail, where he looked landward with eager interest and a thrill of gratification, as his eye followed the slopes of jungle-clad hills to where their summits lifted, darkened by the shadows of clouds. While the rest of that chattering, laughing crowd of passengers thought of nothing but the enjoyment of the hour, he studied those island hills with a most business-like air. He regarded them as the scene of his coming work, for within their valleys and beyond their slopes he should have to find the solution of the problem he had come to solve.

Crane was in a happy frame of mind. And it seemed as though he had sufficient reason. When a man has been commissioned to go to the very corner of the world where he has always wanted to go, and when his business entails the carrying out of just such an adventurous program as he should have loved to plan if left to his own devices, he ought to feel satisfied with fate.

His lungs expanded as he looked across the sun-spangled waves to the homes and hotels along the shore beneath the palms. The trade-winds

were blowing out of his system the last lingering traces of San Francisco fog. While he watched the play of light and shade and cloud and color, with the sunlight glittering over all, he felt himself carried away on a wave of appreciation.

What a glorious thing it is to be healthy and young and full of vitality, with a definite place in the world and a definite work to do,—when the place and the work are altogether to one's taste! Crane felt as though everyone was his friend that morning, and when someone came to his side and began to speak to him, he turned to the speaker with his happiest smile,—the more readily since the person was a young lady and good looking.

The girl looked up brightly, as she leaned on the deck-rail. Her lips seemed to have a habit of parting in a dazzling way on the smallest provocation. Wearing a flamingo-pink jacket and linen skirt and white cape-collar and belt, with her blond hair arranged in a very high and fluffy fashion, she made a picture he liked to admire. But she brought his mind back to the landscape.

"It looks like a dream of the tropics, doesn't it?" she was saying.

"Doesn't it, though, Miss Burl! 'Every prospect pleases, and only man is vile'."

"You're quite severe on the Honolulu people."

"Oh, I didn't mean to be; but if I were at liberty to tell you the business that brings me here, you might be pessimistic, too; that is, pessimistic about some of them, the thundering spiders!"

"What strenuous insects! But I suppose they average up pretty much as people do everywhere."

"I suppose so. We legal men see too much of the seamy side of things. I happen to be on the track of a bunch of bloodsuckers, but I mean to reform them. After I've effected their reformation, I'll be more optimistic over humanity. And this morning, I meant to forget all about business, and devote myself to sightseeing. It's my introduction to the tropics. Isn't it like landing in a new planet?"

It did seem a good deal like arriving in a strange planet, there was so much that was novel in sight. The ultramarine of the sea was spangled with flying-fish that glittered like silver as they flashed from the crests of the low waves. From the shore rose the brown sides of a burned-out volcanic crater, lifting their huge circle abruptly from the water. The crater formed a headland, around which all vessels arriving from the mainland must come. It was known as Diamond Head.

Around Diamond Head the steamship "Nevada" steered on the last stretch of its voyage. Swinging a quarter of a circle, the vessel shaped a straight course for the harbor of Honolulu, now lying in plain sight about four miles away. Harbor and city were betrayed by the tall masts of ships and the heavy funnels of ocean-steamers. As the "Nevada" raced along parallel to the beach at Waikiki, the passengers crowded to the starboard rail, for they had come into full view of one of the loveliest tropical pictures the world offers.

Color! Color and sunlight! Blue waves, and surf, and palm-waved shore; green glitter of wide rice-lands; alluring slopes of tree-covered hills, all

glowing beneath a sky which arched in turquoise-blue, crowned by a dazzling sun. Crane watched the picture with the rest, lingering over every feature. His gaze followed the long waves as they rolled landward.

The smoking surf was rumbling thunderously over a reef to reach the curving shore, up which the water glided, tamed to softness. Along the dazzling strip of beach tall, slender palms were waving, the shimmering green of their branches contrasting vividly with the coral sand. Brown bungalows peeped out from between their trunks. Beyond the palms the rice-fields lay, two miles of vivid green. And farther off, across the level land, there loomed the dark green of high hills, their contours broken by deep, romantic valleys and culminating in a line of peaks where lay a long white roll of trade-wind clouds. With an indigo-blue sky as a background for the picture, and a glorious golden sun gilding every feature, all who saw it felt that their rosiest ideas of the tropics were being realized.

But natural scenery is as uninteresting to many as it is attractive to others. Crane and Miss Burl, still leaning on the rail side by side, had forgotten everything else in the fascination of the landscape, when they were interrupted by someone who had come to Crane's side and was saying,

"What the —— do all these fools see to look at?"

Crane turned quickly. It was a lean, dark-haired young man who had approached and was speaking. Miss Burl colored and walked away. Crane spoke up warmly.

"If you can't appreciate the scenery yourself, sir," he said, "that is no reason why you should insult those who can."

"Scenery! Scenery!" the other answered, and it would be impossible to suggest the sneering contempt in his tone. "I see nothing but rocks and dirt, piled up, with some brush to cover them."

Crane remembered the fellow, now. His name was Carding, and he was returning to his home in Honolulu, after having spent the last four years on the mainland, in pursuit of an education. It occurred to Crane that culture must have had no place in Carding's college course.

"He may have had a technical training along some line or other," he thought. "If so, that was all."

And Crane leaned back against the rail and studied him for a moment.

"Probably his principal occupation in college, was sowing a sackful of wild oats and reaping a crop of bad habits. But, if he doesn't look out, he'll get into trouble," and Crane grinned as he watched the comedy which was coming.

Carding was moving slowly and haughtily along the deck, ignoring everyone. A dozen of the crew were bringing a hawser which would be needed later in making the steamer fast to its pier. The men rushed aft with the heavy rope. It struck Carding's feet. He sputtered and staggered for a moment, then lost his balance and fell forward on his nose.

"Pride goes before a fall," thought Crane, and he turned away. But a moment later the two

were required to stand in line side by side, for now the steamer was nearing the harbor and the passengers were being lined up for the quarantine inspection. Carding, in spite of his misadventure, appeared to be in a better frame of mind than he had been a few minutes before. His sour features were twisted into an attempt at a smile, as he inquired whether Crane "had any friends in the Islands?"

Crane had half started to say that he carried "a letter of introduction to a lieutenant at Fort Ruger," when he thought better of it, and answered,

"No—no friends. I'll have to herd at hotels with the rest of the tourists."

Half an hour later the "Nevada" was at its dock, the gang-plank had been run out, and the passengers were going ashore.

There was a crowd on the pier, below the gangway, and it was a picturesque crowd; men in white linen suits, women in white linen dresses, curio-sellers with models of native canoes, bare-footed boys calling the "Advertiser", Hawaiian flower-sellers, their hats and shoulders radiant with wreaths. Some of the ladies in white linen dresses also wore wreaths,—"*leis*" they called them. And from the crowd came a medley of cries and requests.

"Hotel! Hotel, sir?"

"Nice canoe, mister. Made it myself."

"Excursion to the Pali. Start right away."

"Hawaiian flowers. Best in Honolulu."

"Advertiser! Advertiser! All about the double murder! HORRIBLE!!"

Crane paid no attention to any of these distractions. As he stood beneath the long shed of the pier, he looked around him as though in search of something or someone.

"And now to find the lieutenant," he thought. "They told me they'd have him here to meet me—and I guess that is my man."

The lieutenant was not a difficult man to identify, for his height was six feet, four. He carried his uniform well; his dark blue tunic, his gilded shoulder-straps and his high military cap became him. The deep visor of his cap descended until it almost met a heavy red mustache. But as Crane peered up beneath the visor he caught the gleam of a pair of eyeglasses, and behind them he saw a pair of good-humored blue eyes.

"Is this lieutenant Sherrill?" Crane inquired.

"Yes, sir."

"I have a letter introducing me," and he extended his letter of introduction.

"Oh, you're Mr. Crane. Very glad to meet you, sir," and the lieutenant shook hands with a hearty grip. "I have a machine outside the dock. If you'll let me take you to the Crossroads Club, I can offer you some lunch, and we can talk later."

"I'm with you," and Crane and the lieutenant left the pier together.

"And I think you'll find my talk interesting," Crane added in a lower tone. "We are planning to give the officers of the X Sugar Company the surprise of their lives."

II

PREDATORY WEALTH

THE Crossroads Club had its quarters in a quiet part of Honolulu, directly behind what had once been the royal palace. But monarchy had been abolished from Hawaii, and the palace had been transformed into an executive building for the use of territorial officials. The residences behind it, once the homes of wealthy people, had descended to various and sundry uses. The one which the club occupied, stood at the intersection of two narrow and shady streets, its beautifully planned grounds protected by low walls of coral rock. At the corner there was a wrought-iron gate, where the two men entered.

Behind the wall!—a blaze of flowers, a wealth of verdure, a cloud of fragrance floating on the breath of the trade-wind. The waving of palm branches pleased the eye,—the splashing of fountains made music for the ear. Half hidden by trees, the club-house stood before them—a square structure, with many doors and windows, and balconies on both floors. They followed a path across the lawn to the low entrance, and ascended to the second story, which contained the dining-room.

The streets of the city were baking beneath the bright April sun, but this room, with its windows wide open, was fanned by the trade-wind,

which came rustling through the leaves of trees that shaded the verandah. The lieutenant ushered Crane to a round table which was ornamented with a bouquet of purple hibiscus blossoms.

The lunch was excellent. Crane attacked it with a sprightly appetite, after his five days on board the steamer. They postponed all discussion until after the meal, when they adjourned to a verandah which overlooked the lawn with its scattering of tropical shrubs and trees. They stretched themselves lazily in long rattan chairs. The lieutenant lit a cigar.

"And now, Mr. Crane," he said, "if you'll enlighten me as to how the situation stands, and just what I can do for you, I'll be only too glad to take up the business with you."

The chairs were so easy, and the day was so delightful, that Crane fairly hated the idea of "getting down to business." But the officer had come to the point at once. Except for them, the verandah was vacant, and they might speak freely.

"Let's get on common ground first," Crane answered. "I suppose you are pretty well posted on the trouble that brings me here."

"I know it's a case of a sugar-plantation and predatory wealth, although I can't say I have paid close attention to the details. But I remember how the X Sugar Company was started; ten years ago, and by men who were unable to put up the necessary capital."

"They could advance only a small part of it."

"They were able to launch the enterprise only by the selling of stock. At that time there was

a great deal of building activity in Honolulu. Mechanics from the mainland had come here in large numbers, and were receiving high wages. A large amount of the stock was sold to them, much of it above par, for they saw sugar plantations paying their shareholders dividends of from ten to twenty per cent."

"They expected to get the same."

"But, you know it takes time to break ground on a plantation and to plant the cane. And after that, three years must elapse before a crop is harvested. The stockholders could not expect a dividend in less than four years. Meanwhile, the building boom in Honolulu came to its natural conclusion. When the work was completed, the mechanics began to drift back to the mainland. So those stockholders returned to California, carrying their stock with them, and looking forward to the day when it would yield returns. But you know the result."

"That day hasn't come yet."

"Precisely,—and that about sums up my knowledge of the case."

"And I know what came after," Crane answered. "When the first crop of sugar was sold,—and it was a good one,—not one cent was set aside as a dividend for the shareholders."

"Part of the money was used in paying liberal salaries to the manager and officers."

"And all the remainder was used in enlarging the plantation, and in purchasing additional equipment."

"And the same system has been followed to the

present day. Every year the plantation gets bigger, and the salaries of its officers grow larger, and not a single dividend has yet been declared."

"That's the situation," Crane replied. "The four men who launched the enterprise and who have continued to hold the offices of president, secretary, treasurer and manager, have always kept the majority of the stock in their own hands. To start the plantation they used the money obtained by a sale of the minority of the stock, but they have never paid a cent to the minority stockholders.. Of course, many of those stockholders sold out long ago for what they could get. But there still remain two hundred in California who have clubbed together, and who have pledged themselves not to let go. I, as you know, am the president of their organization, and am here as their representative."

Crane was fairly seething with the subject now, and he began to overflow with facts and figures.

"In case, lieutenant, that you have not kept track of the situation, let me show you the last annual report of the company. Here is the manager's salary,—fifteen thousand dollars per annum. And what does he do for it?"

"He spent nearly the whole of last year traveling in Europe."

"The real manager, as things stand at present, is the overseer, the 'head luna' as they call him in the Islands. He is a very competent man, but he receives only a hundred and fifty dollars a month. The president, secretary and treasurer are each down for fifteen thousand dollars a year.

What do they do? Nothing but sign their names to reports prepared by clerks!"

"Oh, I guess they keep a sharp eye on expenses," interrupted the lieutenant.

"Yes, I presume they do," Crane admitted. "But their salaries are inflated, and these figures represent only a fraction of what they have been receiving. Each has been drawing 'salary and expenses.' Their expenses have included anything and everything they wanted, from \$50,000 homes to limousines. They've been getting rich at the game. They started poor. Now they are becoming 'malefactors of great wealth.'

"Well, so much for history. Here is the present situation; eight sugar plantation in this island,—seven of them managed honestly and efficiently, pay their shareholders dividends of ten to twenty per cent per annum. And here is one plantation which never yet has paid a dividend, and that plantation one of the best in the lot. Yet it has always paid its officers liberally, even during the first four years when no returns were coming in. Its expenses for supplies, are greater proportionally than those of any other plantation. Of course, no one is getting a rake-off."

Sherrill laughed a little at Crane's indignation.

"Well, Mr. Crane," he said, "it's true I bought a little stock in the X plantation, when first I came to these islands, nine years ago. I 'took a flyer,' as they say, and I still hold that stock. The reason I never sold was because I bought above par, and it has been below par ever since. But I never worried myself over the matter. There were

two reasons. First, the government pays me a salary sufficient for my needs. Second, I have a private income. The money means very little to me. And I calculated that the plantation cannot go on expanding forever. The island has its limitations. When they have bought up all the land available, and have covered it with cane, their revenues will be so enormous that they simply must declare a dividend."

"Don't you believe it, lieutenant! Why, they have practically reached the limit now, and they are spending the revenue in purchasing and installing a new equipment for their irrigation-system."

"You think they'll always find a place to put the money?"

"Even if they have to carry the office-cat on the pay-roll, as T. Feline at two thousand dollars a year.

"You say, lieutenant, that the money means very little to you. But on the mainland there are two hundred Americans, most of them with wives and families dependent upon them, to whom the money means a great deal. When two hundred hard-working men have put their money into an enterprise; when they have furnished the capital which made it possible to carry on that enterprise, don't you think they deserve something more in return than a chance to sell out for half what they gave?"

The lieutenant began to sit up and take notice. "I guess I ought to be ashamed of myself, Mr. Crane," he said. "I might have brought some influence to bear on those officers. I am afraid

I played a lazy part. But what do you propose to do?"

Crane grew diplomatic.

"I'll say this much," he answered, "we will no longer submit to the present condition of affairs. We have determined on revolt. Revolt's the word."

"Revolt! And just what does that mean in this case?"

Crane hesitated.

"What will be your first step?" the lieutenant went on. "Will you hold a conference with them, and make a special appeal?"

"It would do no good. They're hardened to special appeals."

"Then you'll bring the law to bear on them?"

"No use. The law cannot touch them. Everything they've done, is, on the face of it, strictly legal. We had them in court three months ago, and could accomplish nothing."

"Then what will you do? I believe you have a definite program in mind."

"Fight fire with fire. But I don't want to draw you into this too far, lieutenant. However, mine's not a program of revenge or malice. It's a program of reformation."

The lieutenant was nearly nettled out of all patience by the vagueness of Crane's answers. But he restrained himself, and tried one more question.

"But how reform men who possess iron-clad consciences, and are well fortified by the law?"

"By playing upon their fears. I believe I can make it, for there's another factor in this case, a factor I haven't mentioned; and that's a band

of Japanese from the X plantation. We're already in communication with them. Here is the situation. The Japanese are out on strike. They're a reckless set, ready for any enterprise. Now, if they're left to themselves, there's sure to be trouble—in fact, there may be bloodshed, which would do no good, and a great deal of harm. But I propose to join forces with them and direct their zeal along a better line."

"How?"

"I can't explain until we have something definite arranged. But, speaking indefinitely, we'll play a game of bluff and 'beard the lion in his den.' We'll come in a body and have a personal interview with the manager and officers of the X Sugar Company, but we'll arrange the interview so that we are masters of the situation. They'll change their tone when they see themselves surrounded by a set of husky Japanese—if we arrange it so there's no chance for interference."

"Change their tone, or telephone for the police."

"That's the very point. It's up to us to arrange a program which won't permit them to send for the police."

"Don't get too strenuous," the officer cautioned.

"Don't be alarmed, lieutenant. We'll not get desperate. Remember, this is a program of reformation. There'll be no damage done, except perhaps to put somebody over a barrel. I mean to take time enough in working out the details, so that the whole affair will amount to no more than a huge practical joke. But it will bring the results we want."

"And those results are——"

"To give the stockholders their dividends, reinstate the Japanese on the plantation, and reform the guilty parties. It sounds ambitious, but I believe I can make it."

"I see. Your plan is to frighten them with a pretense of coercion. I guess, from what I know of the men, it won't take much of that sort of thing to bring them to time. A little physical suasion would be no more than they deserve."

"And there's nothing morally wrong in reforming a set of malefactors."

"Very good, Mr. Crane. If you want my candid opinion, hanging would be too good for the manager and officers of the X Sugar Company. You can reform them all you want to, so far as I am concerned, and you can expect my unqualified endorsement. I imagine I can see some fun coming," and the lieutenant's eyes twinkled as he began to grasp the situation. "They'll get no sympathy from me."

"Thank you, lieutenant. That was just the attitude I expected you to take, from what I've been told. Of course, I can't expect you to go very far. But I'm a stranger in Hawaii, and I shall need a lot of advice. Just let me draw on you for advice and information. If I can get your help in making my plans, it will be all I shall need or expect. When it comes to carrying out the plan, that will be up to me."

"But you haven't decided yet on the details of your program."

"Not yet. On board the steamer I made a dozen

plans, but I haven't the slightest idea as to whether I can carry out a single one of them. I know the whole affair sounds ridiculously simple. As a matter of fact, it's exceedingly complex."

"It's easy to talk of bearding the lion in his den,—but not so easy to do it."

"Precisely. Not until I've studied local conditions thoroughly, shall I feel safe in handling the situation. At present I must meet the men I'm after, and I must learn the country."

"And the first thing you mean to do——"

"Is to explore the island from end to end, from center to circumference. Oh, it's necessary—many reasons. I mean to cruise around it, to climb its hills, to investigate its valleys, to learn its roads, until I know the country as well as I know the pockets in my own coat. Nor need that take much time, in an island only thirty-five miles long. Two weeks should be ample." and he half drew a folding-map from his breast-pocket.

"More interested in making a study of local conditions, perhaps, than in 'bearding the lion'," the lieutenant thought. But Crane was no mind-reader.

"Now the first thing I want to do, and need to do," he continued, "is to circumnavigate the island, to get a general notion of the country. For such a trip it seems to me a motor-boat would be most suitable. Can you advise me as to where I can get a boat, and how I can best avoid publicity in so doing?" and as Crane thought of the work before him, he started from his chair and tramped up and down the verandah, rubbing his hands

together. The lieutenant watched him with a smile.

"If you care to accompany me in my own boat, the Firefly, I shall be glad to take you around the island myself. You see, I am on the staff of the army, not the line. I am not tied down to barrack duty. In fact, my duties call me around the island on tours of inspection. I had planned one for to-morrow."

"Delighted," and Crane's expression cleared. "If I get past every snag as easily as that, I shall have smooth sailing."

"But wait a moment, Mr. Crane," said the other. "I think I see one snag. Or, at least, I want to put you on your guard against it. Look out for leaks!"

"Meaning, lieutenant, ——"

"That there are two hundred stockholders behind you,—and if all of them know the nature of your business in the Islands, someone will be sure to give it away to the officers of the X plantation, in hope of a cheap reward."

"I've thought of that already. In fact, no one outside of a very select committee, knows my business."

"Good enough! And on board the "Nevada," did nobody ask your business, or seem unduly interested in your affairs?"

"Why, only in a very general way. That is—now I think of it—there was one who kept edging in, but he made such a poor impression that his efforts were worse than useless. A young cub by

the name of Carding, it was. He's just out of college, returning to his home in the Islands."

"I guess he hardly counts," said the lieutenant. And then he added. "The stockholders seem to have a most zealous representative in you, Mr. Crane. You haven't the air of a man who is chained to his oar."

"Please don't give me too much credit. Some stock was sold on the mainland, and I own enough to make it quite worth my while to carry this matter through."

So one topic led to another. The sun had set, and the short tropical twilight had faded before the discussion was concluded. They walked together to the hotel where Crane intended to lodge.

It was an immense concrete structure, its front extending the full length of the block,—the city's "newest and most luxuriously appointed fire-proof hotel, a hotel designed to appeal to the conservative." Looking as if it had been transplanted bodily from a mainland metropolis, it seemed altogether inappropriate in a tropical island.

Crane would have invited the officer to dinner, had not the latter suggested,

"I guess we had better be seen together in the city as little as possible. If we avoid each other in public, I think I can serve you best. Good night, Mr. Crane. You know the way to the wharf. I'll see you there at six o'clock to-morrow morning."

They parted with a cordial grip, and Crane went in for dinner.

After the meal he entered the lobby. With its palms and paintings, panelled walls and mosaic pavement, the room resembled in its main features the lobby of a mainland hotel. But it was full of suggestions and flavors of the tropics. Baskets of tropical blossoms stood in the corners. On the walls were gorgeously colored photographs and paintings of Hawaiian scenery. Announcements of excursions to a score of places with appallingly unpronounceable native names, were tacked to a bulletin-board. In one corner of the room a very dark but very neat Hawaiian woman presided over a curio-stand, where the glass top of the show-case was covered with tiny banjo-fiddles, while faces carved from cocoanuts, and specimens of lava from Hawaiian volcanoes, were displayed within the case. Feather hat-bands in peacock blue and scarlet, hung from a line. The exotic tone of everything appealed to Crane's imagination.

He meditatively seated himself in a deep leather chair that stood opposite a tinted photograph—a tall panel showing a long, diminishing perspective of palm trees waving in the trade-wind. Perhaps the picture influenced his meditations. He leaned back, half closing his eyes, while he dreamed of what lay before him as he should explore the country. Some of the pictures which his mind framed were very attractive.

In imagination he was cruising along the coast of a gorgeous tropical island, voyaging over sapphire seas, amid shoals of flying-fish. The wooded slopes of the hills rose, a riot of color, to where waterfalls played in the glens—waterfalls

fed by downpours from mists that capped the highest crests. He could hear the wind in the palms, the surf on the shore; he could see the spray rising in clouds from the coral reef. And he saw himself exploring the tangled cane-fields, where square miles of sugar-cane covered plain and plateau; or searching deep ravines which led to the heart of the hills; or spinning in a motor-car over long white roads that ran beneath the shadow of stupendous cliffs. Then he thought of the clustered flowers; the cocoa-palms; the thatched homes of the natives.

Was he "more interested in making a study of local conditions than in bearding the lion?"

But his mind went on to dwell on the business which had brought him to the Islands. He thought of the planning and plotting it would involve, the handling of delicate situations, until he should "reform" the "malefactors of great wealth" whom he was seeking. In what might he not be involved? It's true his program would begin with the exploration of a fascinating tropical island. But how would it end?

"Whatever the outcome of this business, I'll surely have an interesting experience,—perhaps a strenuous one," he decided, and he retired for the night.

III

YACHTING IN THE TROPICS

AT six-fifteen the following morning Crane and Sherrill walked together down the wharf. The men showed in striking contrast; the lieutenant—more than six feet high, long-limbed, broad-shouldered, with heavy red mustache; Kenneth Crane, of moderate height and build, smooth shaven and almost boyish in appearance. In spite of the fact that the two were of about the same age, the Californian might have passed as ten years the younger. He was “eager-hearted as a boy.” With a marine glass in his hand and a map in his pocket, he was on tip-toe for the voyage of circumnavigation.

The morning was magnificent. The trade-wind clouds had cleared away during the night. Long before noon they would be building their white pyramids above the higher hills. But at that hour the sky was flawless.

“A glorious day for our cruise,” Crane commented, as they stood on the landing-stage and watched the Firefly approaching across the harbor. The long triangular shadows of volcanic peaks were streaking the smooth surface of the water, so that the white sides of the launch were flashing from sun to shade and from shade to sunshine. Far beyond it they could catch a glimpse of breakers on the reef. Their low rumble came

on the quiet morning air. And then, with a whirl and a swirl and a churning of water, the motor-boat swung to the landing-steps.

The Firefly was nearly thirty feet long. The after half of the boat was open. Within that open space there ran a semi-circle of cushioned seats upholstered in leather. Crane and Sherrill took their places on the bench. The mechanic started the engine. The cruise was begun.

They shot across the satin surface of the little harbor, broken behind them by the Firefly's waves, which dashed against the concrete piers, and in a minute more they slipped between the breakwaters and felt the long, slow lift of the Pacific swell. Steering almost due west, they shaped a course for Pearl Harbor.

In twenty minutes the Firefly was five miles from Honolulu. The steady rush of the boat over the water and the put-put of the muffled motor were the only sounds; the only motion was their rhythmic swing over the sea. Crane lay back on the deep leather cushions, his head supported on another cushion which was propped up at an angle. It was a pleasure to study "the lay of the land" under conditions like these.

He let his gaze linger on the distant mountains. Their long slopes climbed to a height of more than half a mile. Crane made a guess that those slopes had once been uniform and smooth, and that the deep valleys which now trenched them had been carved out in the progress of ages. He saw that behind Honolulu and its environs lay the deepest valleys, and at their heads he saw three

great depressions notching the skyline of the hills. The most southerly of those great gashes was the deepest, falling nearly two thousand feet below the summits of the peaks. Its profound valley lay directly behind the harbor. It suggested a mountain-pass. He said as much to Sherrill.

"Yes, that valley is the pass through the mountains," Sherrill explained. "A carriage-road runs to its head. But from here you can form no idea of the opposite side of the range. One would imagine that similar slopes and valleys descend to the opposite shore. As a matter of fact, the mountains break off in gigantic cliffs, dropping sheerly from the summits of the peaks to a plain that is only a few fathoms above the level of the sea. At the head of the valley one seems to stand on the brink of a tremendous precipice. But the road has been carried down to the plain. It has been carved in the cliff and carried down a spur."

They turned their eyes northward to where a long plateau swung its broad curve between the eastern mountains and the western. From where they were they could grasp general effects more easily than they could on land. Now they could see that the island consisted of two mountain-ranges—to call small things by big names—connected by a plateau, and bordered in most places by a low plain. As the island took definite shape and form before their eyes, it suggested a gigantic dumb-bell, with an incredibly thick bar, and with one end nearly twice the size of the other.

And now the Firefly was approaching Pearl Harbor. As they went, they watched the flying

fish that flashed across the water, the sunlight glittering on their sides and wings. They saw bonitas leaping from the dark blue waves that rolled their crests of white to where the reef upraised its coral. The sandy shore, the bathers on the beach, the distant slopes, slow rising, where there grew great fields of cane,—all these they saw. And from those far-off fields white wreaths of smoke were rolling, where the fires played through the canes, consuming but the leaves, nor harming the great stems which soon should pass beneath the rollers of the mills that crunch and crush and grind till all the sugary sap is drawn into the steaming coppers.

"A poetical scene," said Crane. "The day and the view both make me feel like writing poetry," and he half drew a note-book from his pocket. "But I'm afraid there's not much use in my trying."

They finished their run across the open sea, rounded the buoy, black striped with white, which marked the entrance to Pearl Harbor channel, and turned into the long passage leading through the reef. The lieutenant himself took the wheel to steer the Firefly between the coral ledges.

"If this boat is to pile up on the reef, I want it to be my own fault," he said in explanation.

Pearl Harbor has a long, narrow entrance. In that entrance a still narrower channel has been dredged, deep enough to float a battle-ship. Inside the harbor expanded broadly. On a peninsula there stood a little community known by the ambitious name of Pearl City.

This was the place first identified on his map

by Crane, for now he must get down to business. He sat map in hand while the Firefly buzzed up and down the inlets of Pearl Harbor. He reveled in the experience. The out-door scenes, the constantly changing pictures, were like rare wine to him. The graceful inlets, with the rank luxuriance of cane-fields rising from the water's edge, the long leaves trailing in the tide, the sound of the little waves rustling against the canes as the Firefly rushed past, all combined to thrill him like the uplift of great music.

Travel in Hawaii seemed like a dream of heaven! Here was the crystal sea, the sapphire sky; the palm branches of the New Jerusalem were waving by the shore! The choruses of cherubim and seraphim seemed to be the only details lacking. Well, he was satisfied as it was.

Undoubtedly, with a boat like the Firefly, in a smooth sea, they could complete their whirl around the island in a single day. But his hopes were dashed when Sherrill's business compelled a long delay at a naval station. He fussed and fidgetted, as he sat beneath the awning of the launch, or rose and walked up and down the wharf as far as the sentry would permit him to go. He began to doubt whether they would be able to complete the trip according to his schedule,—and his doubts were confirmed when the officer arrived.

"This trip may take me two or three days," Sherrill explained.

Crane looked blank at this, for he had started with "his hands in his pockets" both figuratively and literally. Why hadn't Sherrill spoken sooner?"

"I hardly came prepared for a trip of that sort," he said.

"Oh, don't let that trouble you. We'll chum together. I'll help you out with whatever you need."

Crane wondered whether they were to spend the night on board the Firefly, and he studied the narrow bench as a prospective sleeping-place, but didn't wish to pester Sherrill with inopportune questions just then, for they were on their way now, with the lieutenant at the wheel, keeping the boat in the middle of a narrow channel. It was one o'clock before they glided out of the harbor, into the open sea once more. Crane became conscious of an "aching void."

"I guess we forgot something," he said.

"What is it?"

"Lunch."

"Don't you believe it," and at the lieutenant's command, the mechanic produced a large basket and a folding table. The latter was set up and the contents of the basket arranged upon it. With the engine slowed down for greater comfort, they enjoyed their mid-day meal. Now was an opportune time to discuss the details of the trip.

"When I started," Crane explained, "I had in mind a twelve hours' dash around the shore of the island. Otherwise I should have packed a suit-case. I suppose we'll spend the night on board the boat."

"We might; but I usually put in somewhere, and spend the night at a hotel. There is a tourist hotel on the north shore, and two more on the

east side. Or, if it suits me better, I can put up at a sugar-plantation. There are plantations all around the island, and I am acquainted at all of them. It would suit you to see something of plantation life, wouldn't it?"

"The more I see of island-life, the better."

"Oh, I believe I shall be able to do much more for you, this trip, than give you a bird's-eye view of the shore—or a shark's-eye view. We shall put in at one or two of the hotels, and possibly at a plantation. You'll see something of tourist life, and something of plantation life. At the end of the trip, you'll feel quite at home in the island." The lieutenant's tone was decisive.

It sounded good to Crane. The trip, as he had imagined it, would have amounted to no more than a shark's-eye view of the shore. It was expanding into something better.

As the Firefly buzzed over the brine, they looked up at steep rocky ridges which ran down to the sea. Between those walls of black volcanic rock were narrow valleys, and at the heads of the valleys the mountains rose to heights of three and four thousand feet, for the leeward range was loftier than the windward. The scene was one of dryness and desolation.

"Very few showers travel across the island to this coast," the lieutenant explained.

In the lower end of a valley they could see the irrigated fields of a sugar-plantation. But only in the higher hills were there any signs of a native tropical growth.

They knew that the breeze must be blowing

briskly on the island's windward shore. But very little of the wind reached the sea on which they floated. The sky was very clear. Only a far-away fluff of clouds showed on the horizon. The water lay flat and oily, broken only by the deep breathing of the ocean. Three miles to the west went a sailing-vessel, a tall bark deep laden with a cargo of sugar, lazily swinging over the swells, as it steered northward on its way to California. Its sails showed dark against the bright afternoon sky.

Again Crane lay back on the deep leather cushions. He luxuriated in the warmth and brightness, in the color and contrast, all about him. He saw the gracious tropical pictures with the sunshine glowing on the colors. He felt the soft breath of the trade-wind which seemed like a caress. He was as happy as youth and health and the rapid whirl of the boat across the tropical water, could make him.

"Yachting in the tropics!" he said. "I've read of it; I've dreamed of it, and somehow this seems to fit my notions of what it should be. No wonder there are two yacht-clubs in Honolulu."

The mountains in whose lee they were, had grown steadily higher until they culminated in a great flat-topped peak, rising four thousand feet above the sea.

As the boat rounded the north-west angle of the island, their eyes could sweep the full extent of the northern shore. Long slopes could be seen, sweeping down toward the ocean, to break off abruptly in a massive sea-cliff. But, between the sea-cliff and the beach, there intervened a strip of

coastal plain, perhaps a mile in width, most of it planted with the brilliant green of cane-fields.

There was plenty of wind now, and the Firefly plunged in the choppy waves, scattering the spray in sheets. Muffled in rubber coats, the men crouched in the cockpit. As the sun went down on the wind-lashed waves and the roaring reef, they turned toward the shore.

"We'll stop at the hotel," said Sherrill, and he directed Crane's attention to a structure with a broad white front and pillared portico, which had come into sight. The Firefly, steered by the lieutenant, found an opening in the reef, and running at reduced speed, drifted across the shallow water of a little inlet leading almost to the door. Landing on a lawn which started from the water's edge, they walked across to the entrance.

Crane eyed the place with the frank curiosity of a man who was "learning the island." He saw that the hotel was a frame building, very much in the American style, except that the dining-room was on the broad verandah, or "lanai" as the Hawaiians call it. The guests were taking their places for dinner. Crane and Sherrill were assigned a table.

The dinner did credit to the management of the place. Everything was well served. There was plenty of tropical fruit. The tables were decorated with tropical flowers. The lights with their tinted shades, sparkling on white damask table-cloths and shining silver, lent an atmosphere of richness and

good taste. Crane began to realize what the term "a first-class tourist hotel" meant.

From the verandah a central hall ran through the building. At the end opposite to the dining-room there was a large parlor, and there the guests gathered after dinner. Some rested in deep wicker rocking-chairs. Others gathered around a whist-table. But their comfort was interrupted. Hawaiian mosquitoes!

The hotel had been built on the very edge of a sugar-plantation. In fact, there was a field of cane on the opposite side of the road which ran directly behind it,—and a cane-field is a marvelous breeding-ground for mosquitoes. The net-work of irrigation ditches, with their pools of stagnant water, afforded every facility. Consequently, as darkness came on, hordes of mosquitoes came buzzing across the highway and into the hotel; for the Hawaiian mosquito is one that flies by night. He sleeps by day. At night he is wide awake and hungry.

Myriads of mosquitoes buzzed above the guests. They mingled their hum with the whisper of the night wind as it rustled the leaves of the sugar-cane a hundred yards away, or crept through the fronds of date-palms just outside the door. As a protection against the pests, three little copper trays had been set, each above the chimney of a kerosene lamp. The lamps stood on the floor. Each tray was loaded with a powdery compound, the fumes of which were intended to drive away the insects.

But the hotel was run on an economical plan,

its good table to the contrary notwithstanding. For parsimonious reasons the powder had not been ignited. Presently a guest touched a lighted match to one of the trays. The two others were ignited likewise. The fumes diffused themselves, and the mosquitoes sailed away.

But now a petulant and peevish clerk came bustling into the parlor. "Why has this powder been lighted? That's not the way to use it. It mustn't burn. It must only cook above the heat," and he emptied the trays, replenishing them with fresh compound.

Once more the mosquitoes returned to the attack. Clouds swarmed around each light, many of them striking the hot chimneys, to fall kicking. Those that struck the lamps above the card-table, fell on the cards, to the extreme annoyance of the players.

But presently a little ash from the lieutenant's cigar found its way into one of the trays. In some equally mysterious manner, the other trays were ignited. The powder began to smolder. A slightly pungent odor diffused itself through the room. Once more the mosquitoes retreated, and the guests sat in comfort.

Sherrill made a trip to the desk to look at the register. Presently he returned with the information that a party of tourists from the "Nevada", were spending the night at the hotel.

"Here come some of them," he added.

A tall girl, all in white, with a light blue ribbon around her blond hair, crossed the room. She was accompanied by a young man. A middle-aged couple followed. Crane recognized the party—

professor Burl, his wife and family. The recognition was mutual.

"Professor Burl!"

"Mr. Crane! I'm delighted to see you. I thought you were in Honolulu. I didn't see you on the train, coming out."

"Oh, I got here by motor-boat."

Introductions followed. Sherrill and Miss Burl gravitated to a whist-table. Crane found himself paired off in conversation with the professor. He had discovered Burl to be the sort that is a little diffident on short acquaintance. He began to wonder how he should draw him out.

As Crane rested in a huge wicker chair, a cigar between his lips, the mosquitoes put to rout, the soft breath of the trade-wind drifting through the room, and the rustle of palm-branches and sugar-cane coming in through the windows with the sound of the distant wash of surf on the reef, he grew reflective, and his reflections turned naturally to the subject of sugar. Ah! a timely topic. A recollection of the business which had brought him to the islands, inspired his opening remark.

"Professor Burl, can you explain," he began rather abruptly, "why it is that sugar has such a corrupting tendency in its effects upon the human conscience?"

"Has it?" countered the professor, gasping and sparring for time. "I've heard charges against alcohol and tobacco. They even say that Standard Oil is demoralizing. But sugar? Sugar tends to sweeten mankind."

Crane chuckled.

"I guess you never have investigated the sugar industry, and its effects upon big business."

"I always leave such investigations to legislative committees."

"Well, wasn't sugar at the foundation of the slave-trade? Men first were stolen from Africa, to hoe sugar-cane in the West Indies and Brazil. And later the products of the plantations had a most demoralizing effect on the New England conscience. Wasn't a tendency to 'sand sugar' one of the common failings of the New England store-keeper? 'Sanding sugar and watering rum,' you know. Yes, and they short-weighted the sugar, too."

"That sounds bad," Burl admitted. "They must have been a depraved set; first mix it with sand and then short-weight it. But was it the sugar that demoralized the store-keeper, or the store-keeper who demoralized the sugar?"

"Can a man demoralize a commodity?"

"Well, consider rye as an example. When it is ground to flour and baked as bread, it has an excellent reputation. But when it is diverted from the oven to the still, there is a difference."

"But the rye itself is the foundation of it all," Crane insisted. "In the same way, sugar was the foundation of the slave-trade, for that trade meant the supplying of labor to the great sugar estates of Brazil and the West Indies. And remember what an effect that trade had on those who engaged in it! It became a question whether the slaver or the pirate was the more undesirable citizen. Oh, sugar is a demoralizer."

"But is it? Your argument is not convincing."

"I have shown that it was."

"Which is not to the point. We have left all that behind us, a hundred years or more. The sugar industry had a wild youth, but as it grew older, it grew respectable."

"Oh, I don't know," Crane answered. "During the nineteenth century there was plenty of 'near-slavery' in connection with the sugar plantations of Australia. Did you never hear of 'blackbirding' in the South Seas; stealing natives from the islands of the South Pacific, carrying them to Australia, and compelling them to labor on the sugar estates?"

"I have heard of that very thing, and I also know that it, too, is a thing of the past. The sugar industry of Australia is now on a 'pure white' basis. And, by the way, I understand that it is more prosperous now than ever before. Oh, the world is getting better all the time, Mr. Crane."

"Perhaps it is. But even to-day there are many things in the sugar industry which would hardly stand the spotlight."

"As for instance?"

"Well, when captains of industry use their privileges as majority owners of the stock, to compel the plantations to buy all supplies of their agencies so that they may absorb thirty per cent more of the profits than the minority stockholders receive. That is an illustration of how, right at the present day, sugar saps the morals of mankind."

"Oh, yes! It was the sugar that did it! Nevertheless, my contention holds that conditions have improved wonderfully in the sugar industry."

No more 'blackbirding', sugar cultivated by free labor, labor free to come or go as it pleases."

"Yes, nominally the labor is free, but there's a difference between law and practice. I might cite an incident of which I know; one which happened in this island, not three weeks ago, when fifty Spanish and Portuguese laborers who had bought their tickets for the mainland, were prevented by chicanery from sailing, and were juggled into signing a contract—a contract which has bound them to remain ten years longer in Hawaii."

"But were those men compelled to remain here? Might they not have taken passage in some other boat?"

"They could, provided their funds held out. It's true that no one is forcibly prevented from leaving the island. He may go, if he insists on going; but there are many ways to hinder him."

"And yet that very incident is a splendid proof that conditions are improving," argued Burl. "In the eighteenth century there was black slavery with the horrors of the 'middle passage.' In the nineteenth century there was 'blackbirding,' with its attendant brutality and misery. In the twentieth century we raise our hands in holy horror and exclaim in virtuous resentment if a few Portuguese laborers are juggled out of an opportunity to use their steamer-tickets."

"Very true," Crane admitted. "And yet I still hold that there is an underlying something in sugar itself which casts an evil spell over the hearts and minds of mankind. What is this we hear of the methods of the central sugar business on the

mainland, the methods of the trust? Don't they manipulate prices down while crops are being bought from the planters, and up after the crops have been delivered?"

"I admit it. And I have even heard of false weighing to defraud the customs, and of the tapping of water mains near refineries without letting the water companies know of it. Shocking, isn't it?"

"It ought to be so considered. I can think of another instance. Even the honest Vermont farmer, with his maple-sugar, has been known to fall under the evil spell, and to substitute cheap brown sugar until his product is certainly sixty-five per cent fraudulent and the rest under suspicion."

"And the by-products of sugar," answered Burl; "they have an evil reputation; Jamaica and Santa Cruz rum, distilled from the molasses."

"I see we're beginning to stand on the same ground," replied Crane. "We are reaching the same conclusion."

"Are we?"

"Aren't we? As soon as I bring a charge against sugar, you cap that charge with another. Our discussion has not been a long one, and just consider what a list of evils we already have laid at the door of sugar,—rum, robbery, fraud, man-stealing and a frightful undermining of the New England conscience. Why, when we catalogue all of its bad influences, it appears that the pure, snowy sugar, which you, professor, believed to exist only to sweeten mankind, is Satan himself in disguise."

Burl leaned back a little farther in his chair and

laughed. Then he assumed a more serious tone than that in which he had been speaking.

"Well, Mr. Crane," he said, "you commenced by asking me a question,—a question about a topic to which I had never given much thought. And our argument has led me to a conclusion. Doesn't it all come down to this, that sugar, like everything else, is capable of use or abuse?"

"Suppose you illustrate."

"Well, consider its abuses first. We may transform it into Jamaica and Santa Cruz rum. By over-reaching, grasping business methods, we may give the commodity itself a bad name; that is, a bad business name. Or we may make a proper use of it, as a necessary and a wholesome food. And we may so develop the industry of producing it as to afford prosperity for a large population, instead of swollen fortunes for a few; a good living for thousands of contented farmers on small holdings, instead of misery and death for hordes of negroes herded on West Indian plantations."

"Well done, professor. It's up to mankind."

"It's up to us. Use or abuse. Rum and 'blackbirding' and inflated fortunes vs. refined sugar and a prosperous population."

And then then the professor added,

"And isn't it true that for the last hundred years, we have been approaching nearer and nearer to the latter state of affairs?"

Crane had to admit it. With a hearty hand-clasp he parted from the professor, for he and Sherrill would retire early, to be ready for an early start next morning.

IV

THE ROOF GARDEN

WHERE gigantic windows of plate-glass looked out on the pavement, was situated the dining-room of the "big hotel" in Honolulu, where Crane had registered. The room was on the ground-floor, so that it might be appraised through the windows by the passers-by—an arrangement made with an eye to publicity.

On the evening of his return from the "voyage of circumnavigation" Crane sat at one of the damask-covered tables, dressed in a suit of crisp white linen, and fresh from a bath. He had just finished a dinner "fit for the gods"—at least it had seemed so to a man with an appetite sharpened by a day in the open. As he rose from the table his mood was very philanthropic. His soul expanded with his waist-measure. He could almost have been cordial to an officer of the X Sugar Company, and when he saw John Carding's eye fixed on him through the plate-glass window, he answered Carding's bow with a very pleasant smile.

However, he did not feel expansive enough to care for the young man's society, and when Carding turned toward the hotel entrance, Crane hurried from the room to avoid him.

"If the cub's after me," he thought, I'll make him hunt for me."

The evening was young, and Crane felt like enjoying the fresh air of the night. He entered an elevator and ascended to the top of the hotel, for on the flat roof there was a roof-garden.

The garden was shielded by two wind-breaks, made by the building rising a story higher at each end, so as to shelter a long central space where banana trees and fan-palms grew in deep boxes. Rows of smaller boxes held hibiscus bushes.

It was good to be there. The place was redolent of the languorous tropics.

There were no dazzling arc-lights. The soft glow of shaded electric bulbs harmonized with the night.

The night was clear. There was no moon. Only the great tropical stars glowed in a sky which was black velvet. The air was cooled by the gentle stirring of the trade-wind, as it came fresh from hills where showers were falling.

Honolulu harbor lay only a few hundred yards away. Crane saw the lights of the vessels at the wharves. He saw the riding-lights of a revenue cutter. He noted the fitful flashes from fishing-boats, and the strong glare from the lighthouse. An inter-island steamer was arriving, moving slowly across the water, both of its decks blazing with electricity. Meanwhile, a band was playing somewhere in the city. The breeze brought the boom and blare of the music, softened by distance. He heard it die down, and then he heard a roaring native chorus rise, accentuated by thumps on the base drum. The unfamiliar lights, the unfamiliar sounds, the tropical feel of the air, all served to

impress upon him that he was in an unfamiliar environment.

To a resident of those regions the night would not have appealed as anything unusual. But to Crane, with the memory of San Francisco fogs still strong in his mind, it seemed marvelous.

"Spicy breezes blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle," he murmured, as he stretched himself in a deep rattan chair which stood beneath a palm. He was in a mood to give his soul to mellow meditation.

He thought of the business which had brought him to Honolulu. Inspired by a good dinner, he saw it coming to the happiest of conclusions. With the optimism of youth he could see only his own side of the situation. It never occurred to him that the malefactors might be doing any planning and plotting of their own.

The place where he lay was in deep shadow. A dozen feet away there stood a scattering of rattan chairs and tables, showing strongly against the darkness beyond. They were unoccupied at the moment. But five minutes later he heard the cheery voices of a party of guests. A tall girl, all in white, with a light blue ribbon around her blond hair, crossed the roof-garden. A party of four approached. He recognized professor Burl, his wife and family.

"Our trails cross again," he thought, as he saw them help themselves to chairs, but he lay still and said nothing, for he felt embarrassed when he thought that they must necessarily connect him with a plight into which they had been plunged that afternoon.

They seemed to be in a merry mood. There were jokes and repartee.

"This isn't eavesdropping," thought Crane. "This is a public place. And evidently they don't mind if they are overheard, for there are others as near to them as I." And then he saw John Carding coming across the roof.

Carding's lean face was as long as ever, his black hair just as stiff. He was walking slowly, and evidently was looking for someone. His eye caught that of professor Burl. The professor rose with quick courtesy, his hand outstretched.

"Good evening, Mr. Carding."

"Good evening, professor. I didn't expect to see you here. I thought you were out of town."

"Then you weren't looking for me. I saw you were looking for someone, and I thought perhaps I might be the guilty party."

"Of course I'm delighted to see you, professor, but it was Mr. Crane I was after. You remember him on board the Nevada? I saw him in the dining-room ten minutes ago, and they told me in the office he had gone to the roof-garden. You haven't seen him, have you?"

"Why, no. We arrived here just this minute. Perhaps Mr. Crane will show himself later. Meanwhile, won't you join us?"

"Oh, I guess so," and Carding, not very graciously, accepted the wicker chair which the professor offered.

"You have been out of town, haven't you, professor?" Carding asked.

Mrs. Burl answered for her husband. "Indeed

we have! And such an experience! It was like a chapter in a dime novel. And, indirectly our adventures came through your friend, Mr. Crane."

"Oh, then you know what Crane has been doing with himself," and now Carding was all interest. Mentally he blamed himself for having almost avoided an interview with the Burls.

"Yes, we have seen a good deal of Mr. Crane," answered Mrs. Burl. "But I'll let the professor tell you the story. You know, stories are among his specialties."

"Listeners hear no good of themselves," thought Crane. "Here comes the story."

"I certainly have a new story on my list," laughed Burl. "But it was a friend of Mr. Crane's, an artillery officer, lieutenant Sherrill, who got us into the predicament."

"What! have Crane and Sherrill been traveling together?"

"Yes, they've been circumnavigating the island, in a motor-boat. The way we met them was like this. We went by rail, fifty miles, to a hotel on the northern shore, where we stopped over night. After dinner, we met Mr. Crane, and he introduced us to his friend, the artillery officer. When we said 'Good night,' we didn't expect to see them again very soon, for they intended to travel by water, while we went on by land. But the next morning they offered to take my son and daughter in their boat, part of the way to Honolulu, while Mrs. Burl and I set out by motor-car. We came down the east coast of the island. Mrs. Burl was quite enraptured with the scenery."

"Of all the gorgeous scenery I ever have seen, that was the grandest," she interrupted. "What a combination of pictures! The deep, deep blue of the sky, the fleecy white of clouds, the glowing green of hill and plain, with here and there a dark volcanic rock just showing through the verdure!"

"In fact, all of us have been delighted beyond measure, although I believe Mrs. Burl expressed herself the most warmly."

When the professor and Mrs. Burl expressed the pleasure which the landscapes had given them, Carding experienced an acute pain. Perhaps it was not as bad as if "a dart had pierced his liver," but he hurried them away from the subject as quickly as he could.

"Yes! Yes!!! But we fellows who were born on the island don't think much about it. It's such an old story to us. But where did the adventure come in?"

"I was just coming to that. Of course, we could have reached Honolulu by noon, but we decided to make a day of it on the east coast. The chauffeur told us of a place, kept by some Chinese, where we could get a fairly good lunch. When we arrived at the place, we found the young people, with Crane and Sherrill, there before us. It was after lunch that the artillery officer advised us to visit a sugar plantation tucked away in the extreme southeastern corner of the island. He told us what a glorious good fellow the manager was, how pleased he always was to see visitors, and what a warm reception he would give us. Well, we got the warm reception."

"But, father, it wasn't Mr. Sherrill's fault!" his daughter interrupted.

"No; he never dreamed what he was getting us into. Well, to go on with my story, the lieutenant had such a courteous dignified manner, and gave us so positive an assurance, that we never dreamed of misadventure. Away we went, ten miles or more, over a succession of little hills."

Burl was getting warmed up to his subject. He hitched forward in his chair. He spread his hands for dramatic effect. Carding saw the symptoms, and squirmed inwardly.

"We topped a little hill," Burl continued. "The machine slid between two high banks of clay, and the plantation came into view. Just as we bent forward to see it better, we heard a hoarse order, 'Stop that machine.'"

"Two rough looking fellows, with rifles in their hands, slouched into the road.

"'Where are you going?'"

"'To the plantation,' the chauffeur answered.

"'We'll go with you,' and they mounted the foot-board, one on each side. We tried to ask them some questions, but they were most uncommunicative.

"Presently we were at the plantation. We stopped near a row of low frame buildings. One of the men went inside. 'He's gone to consult the manager,' the other explained.

"Then the man came back and wanted our names. I wrote them out and gave him the paper.

"We waited half an hour. Then he came again. 'All of you get out,' he said.

"So far, we had thought our welcome a most chilly one. But now it began to warm up.

"Our captors escorted us to a little shed. Then one of them explained. 'Now, we don't know your little game,' he said, 'but we ain't taking no chances. You people are going back to Honolulu, and two of the boys are going with you, as soon as they get something to eat, and saddle their horses. While you wait, we'll keep you where you can't play no tricks,' and he opened the shed-door.

"We would have argued with them, but just then a squad of Japs came up, each of them carrying a ferocious-looking knife."

"Oh, the most frightful knives I ever saw," Mrs. Burl interrupted; "Nearly as long as my arm, and as broad as my hand, and as sharp as razors."

"Yes, I know," said Carding. "Those are the knives they use for cutting cane. But I never thought they looked so bad."

"Well, they took all the argument out of us, and when the men signalled the Japs, we obeyed meekly while they put on each of us a pair of handcuffs."

"Handcuffs!" and Carding wondered whether the professor wasn't stretching the story a little.

"Handcuffed we were, and then into the shed we were herded. There was a rough wooden bench, which had been hastily dragged inside. Down we sat, the most disconsolate bunch of tourists that ever happened. But the worst was yet to come!

"We had thought that the guards and the knives and the handcuffs were bad enough. But now they shut the door. The place had a roof of corrugated iron. The sun beat full upon it, and almost roasted

us alive. There wasn't a particle of ventilation, except through the cracks. I guess the Black Hole of Calcutta was no worse.

"There we stayed for half an hour, baking beneath the broiling sun of the tropics. Our perspiration poured in streams. We seemed to be melting. I assure you it was no joke.

"Then the door was flung open. There stood Crane and Sherrill with the manager. They had arrived in the boat, an hour after we had arrived in the car. The lieutenant had explained everything to the manager, who was all apologies now. Our handcuffs were removed. They had been put on us without the manager's knowledge. Our close confinement was due to overzealousness on the part of deputy sheriffs who were guarding the plantation."

"But why should deputy sheriffs be guarding a sugar plantation?"

"On account of labor troubles. Two hundred of their best men had been spirited away," and the professor went on to give the conclusion of the story.

"Really," he admitted, "the manager treated us royally after he knew who we were. But if he had heard us expressing our opinions of him and Sherrill while we were locked in the shed,——" and the professor shook his head as though in grave doubt as to how to end the sentence, while the rest of the party tittered.

"Well, now that it is all over, the experience doesn't seem so bad," said Mrs. Burl. "But you can hardly imagine how good it seems to get back

to Honolulu and the hotel with its shower-baths and its chance for a complete change of clothing."

"To sharpen appreciation, there is nothing like contrast," said the professor. "To enjoy rest we must be weary; to enjoy food we must be hungry; to properly appreciate any good thing, it is necessary to have known its lack. This afternoon we were hot, perspiring, dusty and dirty, a little tired by our long ride. This evening we are back at the hotel, with its shower-baths, as Mrs. Burl says. And how we appreciated its comforts and opportunities for cleanliness! How good our dinner tasted after our day in the open air! And how good it feels to lean back in these chairs and rest and enjoy the cool air of the evening, after the heat and dust of the day!"

The professor, once started, was a man who liked to monopolize a conversation. But Carding had been on pins and needles for some minutes to find out more about Crane's relations with Sherrill, and now he cut in with a string of questions.

"Were Crane and Sherrill old friends?" "How did they come to be traveling together?" "What was their object in making the trip?" "What points had they visited en route?" and so on and so forth. The professor could only answer that Crane appeared to be a tourist, intent on seeing the sights of Hawaii, and that he probably had accepted the lieutenant's invitation for a cruise just as anyone else might have accepted, had he been fortunate enough to be invited.

Meanwhile, Crane lay and listened and asked himself, "How comes that fellow to be so interested

in my comings and goings?" and the lieutenant's caution recurred to him, "Look out for leaks." "Is there a leak in this business, somewhere?" he asked himself. "It's a good thing I overheard this conversation. I'd hate to play the spy on the professor, but as for Carding—All's fair in war."

At that moment a page arrived with lieutenant Sherrill's card. Burl and his party withdrew, following the boy. Crane rose and walked to the parapet. Resting his arms on the gray stone he looked toward the harbor.

As he stood there he kept puzzling his brain over Carding's attitude. The only conclusion he could come to was that his proper course would be to continue to act as he had so far, doing nothing overt until the time to strike should arrive; also to have as little as possible to say to the lieutenant in public.

His understanding of the subject would have been improved wonderfully, could he have read the thoughts which revolved in Carding's mind as he walked up Fort street. "Perhaps we don't know the names of the holders of the minority stock in the X Sugar Company! Perhaps I haven't been paid for a year to keep an eye on those people! Perhaps we don't know that something is in the wind! Wish I knew just what it is. Well, I'll keep close tab on Mr. Crane from now on."

V

FRANK ATTEN, SECRETARY

NEXT morning, Carding lost no time in "getting busy," as he expressed it.

"The first thing to do," he thought, "is to let them know that Crane is here, and put them on their guard," and he inquired by telephone whether Frank Atten, secretary of the X Sugar Company, was in his office. Assured on that point, he took his way down Fort street to the central portion of the city, where he entered an office with the sign "Tropical Investment Company."

The Tropical Investment Company consisted of Mr. Frank Atten. A smaller sign informed the public that he was also "attorney-at-law." His duties as secretary of the X Sugar Company were so nominal that there was no sign to indicate that he had any connection with the corporation.

The office was not a large one, nor did its appearance indicate that much business was transacted there. It consisted of a single room. The rear half was railed off. A stenographer sat behind the railing. There was a roll-top desk, its top ornamented with a row of pineapples. Their golden brown and lustrous green lent a dash of color to the room. Frank Atten was sitting at the desk.

He was a man of large physique and imposing appearance. As an undergraduate at college, he

had played center on the 'Varsity football team. In those days he had weighed two hundred pounds, and he had been putting on weight ever since. But his frame was so large—he was over six feet high and broad in proportion—that he didn't seem unwieldy. In truth, he was by no means a bad looking man. With his broad, smooth-shaven face and clear-cut features and dark hair, he reminded one somehow of those Flemish and Dutch burgomasters whose portraits the old masters of the Middle Ages delighted to paint.

He was no vulgar sharper, for, whatever may be said of the shortcomings of lawyers, the man who practises law usually has a good deal of respect for the law. Whatever Frank Atten did, was strictly legal. But he always seemed to get the long end of a bargain, and his reputation for hoggishness was such that there were those who had once been his warm friends who now claimed that had the Prodigal Son applied to him for permission to eat "the husks the swine fed upon," he would have asked the young man to "pay in advance" for the meal.

He had the build of a hippopotamus, and along with the build, he had the voracity of the animal. Ever since he was a boy he had been guided by two rules of conduct,—never to let a dollar get by him if he could help it, and always to make sure that his expenses were being paid by someone else. For the last six years all the bills of himself and family had been charged to the running expenses of the X sugar plantation. Wasn't Atten secretary of the company? And wasn't he entitled

to remuneration?—salary and expenses. "The laborer is worthy of his hire."

Atten prided himself on his address. With his expansive smile, his expansive waist-measure, his dignified tone, and his hearty handclasp, he could win confidence where others would only meet suspicion. With young men he cultivated an easy air of good-fellowship. But everything he did was a pose. He was always "out for Atten." When his smile was most genial, he was surest to be thinking how he "could eat the other fellow up," or at least "upset the other fellow's apple-cart." In short, he exemplified the adage that a man can "smile and smile and be a villain still."

But the man who is totally self-centered is apt to defeat himself. No matter what line Atten took up, he was apt to "go up like a rocket and come down like a stick." On leaving college, he had entered the teaching profession. Schools outbid each other to attract the ex-football-champion. But, as an educator, he carried so many side-lines, he was interested in so many money-making schemes, that after a short career school authorities advised him to devote himself altogether to finance. Then it was that he had studied law, and had come to the Hawaiian Islands, where he established a business connection with some parties who wished to start a sugar plantation, and who wanted a glib talker to boost their enterprise and a lawyer to watch over its legal affairs.

But he still carried side-lines, and the Tropical Investment Company was his latest. With a ready flow of language he was explaining the advantages

of the Hawaiian Islands to a prospective investor. He recognized Carding, and called,

"Just take a chair, John. Miss Smith, will you let Mr. Carding have this morning's Advertiser?"

From these indications Carding judged that Atten would not be at liberty very soon. He settled himself with the paper, but his nature led him to pay less attention to the news than to the conversation going on behind the railing; especially as he thought he recognized the back of Atten's visitor.

Atten resumed the thread of his talk. "Yes, sir," he went on, "as I was saying, I have been a resident of this city for the past ten years and some months. All I possess is invested in these islands, and I have prospered wonderfully. I think I can illustrate our situation here by means of a little story. Perhaps you remember what the editor said of his state,—it was Kansas, I believe. He said, 'We have no Shakespeares among us, but we have happiness and we have prosperity.' He believed they had good cause to be content.

"Well, it's a good deal like that here in Hawaii,—perhaps a little more so. I don't know whether any of us shall leave permanent foot-prints on the sands of time, but we have happiness and we have prosperity," and Atten beamed on his visitor with a most winsome smile.

"Do I understand from that," the man inquired, "that you advise me to settle in Kansas or to settle in Hawaii?"

"Well, if you want to live in a country where you can eat your dinner in the open air on the

verandah every day in the year, I advise Hawaii. But if you prefer a place where you need to keep your cyclone cellar propped open and one eye always turned to windward to see if a 'twister' is coming,—a country where, as the poet so picturesquely puts it,

'Full oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies,'
then choose Kansas."

But Atten's visitor was ready to meet him on that ground.

"I had no notion of going there," he answered, "but please remember that when Mr. Goldsmith wrote so unkindly of Kansas, he also commented caustically on the tropics. He mentioned

'Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance
crowned,
Where the dark scorpion scatters death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake.'

"How is that for a picture of the tropics?"

"It's not a picture that applies to these islands, however well it may apply to British India," answered Atten. "In the first place, there is not a rattlesnake nor any other sort of snake to be found in all this country. Our scorpions are not venomous, and our fields are not poisonous, even if they are luxuriant beyond measure. We have

no bats, and the thermometer rarely goes above eighty degrees in the shade."

"Then the only features which you admit are the 'matted woods where birds forget to sing.'"

"I guess we have them, and they contain immense supplies of very valuable timber."

The visitor gave a short laugh, and then he said, "Well, Mr. Atten, this is certainly a very attractive country."

Atten needed no further encouragement. He launched out, "And the opportunities which it offers are absolutely limitless; sugar, pineapples, rubber, cocoa-nuts, coffee,—every one of them a money-maker. If handled on a large scale, each is a bonanza."

"Millions in it, eh?"

"Millions in it, and millions are being taken out. Consider our markets; they cover the globe. Just see our geographical location," and he pointed dramatically to a map of the world, which hung above his desk. It showed all routes of travel converging to the Hawaiian Islands. Two lines of bold black type informed the public that Honolulu is "The Cross-roads of the Pacific."

"H'm. Seems to me that map shows that your nearest market is two thousand miles away."

"But we have water transportation, sir; unlimited competition. If any line tries to cinch us on freight rates, we cable to Norway and here comes a Norwegian tramp. He gets a bounty from his government for every mile he steams. He can carry our products for nothing, and still make a profit."

"Good enough. But tell me something about sugar. Any chance for an outsider?"

"Sugar! That's our mainstay! Plenty of land left yet; pay for it on the installment plan. Harvest your first crop in three years. After that your net profit is one hundred dollars per acre per annum. The mill builds a railway to your door, and takes every pound you produce.

"Or, if you don't want to go in independently, buy stock in some company organized to carry on the business on a large scale."

"But I've heard some strange stories about the sugar industry. Do you know of the X plantation?"

"I know there is such a property."

"At the hotel they tell me it never yet has paid a dividend."

"Simply because the stockholders prefer to put the returns into development work, buying and planting additional acreage. But when that development work comes to its natural conclusion, just think what a magnificent piece of property they will have! The dividends they don't get now, will return to them multiplied by ten."

"All right. But I want to learn about all of your products. How about pineapples?"

"They're easier still. The pineapple industry is the home of the independent planter. Our pines weigh ten pounds apiece, some of them. Get land on the installment plan, and get your plants from the cannery. Each pine has a young plant, growing on top of it. The canner slices it off, and gives it to you. You stick a few thousand

in the dirt and nature does the rest. Harvest your first crop in a year and a half, and after that one hundred dollars per acre per annum net. Wish I could introduce you to my friend, John Hennessey. He came to Honolulu, ten years ago, without a cent. Got a job on the tramway as motorman. Saved his money. Bought a few acres of pineapple land. Planted one acre, and hired a Jap to look after it. Next year he planted five. Now that fellow's rich."

Atten had seized a huge pine from the top of his desk, and flourished it while he talked.

"But how about coffee?"

"Coffee! Oh, that's too easy! Sugar, you have to irrigate and cultivate. Pineapples, you have to cultivate. But coffee! You just take the plants into the forest primeval and stick each of them into the ground under the shade of a tree. No irrigation, no cultivation. Just turn them loose in the forest and let them grow.

"And rubber is just as easy. Cocoanuts, too. All of them moneymakers of the first magnitude, but some of them not very well established here yet. I don't want to give you figures, unless I can speak with absolute certainty," and Atten beamed with a very virtuous air.

"And does the government encourage settlers?"

"It surely does. Why, the government maintains an agricultural experiment station, where every problem you might run up against is being solved for you."

"But, see here. Here is something I don't understand. If these islands afford such splendid

opportunities to rich and poor, why are people leaving them for the mainland? Two days ago, one hundred Portuguese laborers ran away from one of the plantations, and sailed to the mainland."

"Are you sure of that? Have you seen any such statement in any of our daily papers?"

"No, sir. I suppose the Advertiser doesn't advertise such occurrences. I heard it from one of the guests at the hotel,—Professor Burl. He had visited the plantation, and got his facts on the spot."

"Well, then all I can say is that those people were grossly deceived and misled by someone. They'll never be able to do as well on the mainland as they could have done here. But I see you are thinking seriously of locating. If you let me know about how large a sum you could invest, I could advise you better."

The man mentioned a sum which wasn't very large, but it made Atten's mouth water, nevertheless. "Never let a dollar get by," he thought.

"The large island of Hawaii," he announced, "is the true place in which to locate. Why, with its four thousand square miles, it is bigger than all the other islands in the group put together. Now, we're opening up a district on its west coast, equally good for sugar or pineapples, and that district is only four miles from the forest. You could put part of your land into sugar, part into pines, and occupy your leisure time with planting coffee bushes under the trees," and Atten pointed out the location on a large wall-map.

The man studied it a moment.

"As nearly as I can make out from the scale of this map," he said, "the nearest town is forty miles away. Well, Mr. Atten, if I sighed 'for a lodge in some vast wilderness,' the locality you suggest would appeal to me very strongly. But I should prefer to be near Honolulu."

Atten's winsome smile suffered an eclipse.

"There you go. That's the trouble with our people. Instead of getting out in the country, where a man can be his own master and make money, labor and poverty huddle in cities, where they can hear brass bands, enjoy the noon-day growler, and envy luxuries they cannot obtain."

"It seems to me, Mr. Atten, I've seen something like that in print, somewhere. No, I am not very poor, and I don't drink. Beer doesn't appeal to me. But neither does the forest primeval. It seems to me as though a man ought to be able to locate in this island, have his farm out in the country, and his home in Honolulu. I am sure there are people who are situated just that way."

"Certainly there are. If you choose to pay enough, I guess you can get land in this island. But I can meet you on your own ground. This is an investment company. We are developing a large acreage ourselves. You can put your money into the company. We will manage, cultivate and harvest an acreage proportional to your investment. You can live here in Honolulu with your family, and take the annual returns. Of course, you would not make as much that way as if you went on the land yourself, but you'd do very well."

No, the man wanted to go on the land himself,

but balked at the idea of going to the large island of Hawaii. He had been "reading up about that island. Flows of lava a mile wide come rolling down the mountains. Tidal waves a hundred feet high come roaring in from the sea, and these are accompanied with terrific earthquakes. If the lava doesn't bury you, and the water doesn't drown you, the earthquakes quake your house down and kill you sure." No, no, if he located in the Islands, it must be in the island where Honolulu stands, "and where everything is peaceful."

Atten almost exploded.

"Tidal waves! lava flows! earthquakes!" he exclaimed. "Why, my dear sir, such upheavals as you mention may not occur once in a hundred years. Wait," for the man had risen, "I cannot permit you to go without correcting such a mistaken notion. Here's the Advertiser. No, don't laugh! I mean to show you, not what the editor says, but what the president of the Kansas Southern Railroad says. He returned yesterday from a visit to the volcano, and—see, here it is, on the second page—he says, 'If there is anything in opportunity, scenery and climate, the island of Hawaii is an earthly paradise.' He's stopping at the big hotel, and if you doubt the paper, go interview him for yourself."

But the man declined to continue the argument. Assuring Atten that he had already taken up too much of the latter's valuable time, and that he "could not make an investment without studying the matter further," he ended by bidding the secretary "Good morning."

Consequently the latter was in an unamiable frame of mind when he turned to interview Carding.

"I'd have landed that sucker, sure," he said, "if those knockers at the hotel hadn't been talking to him."

"I doubt very much if you would. Do you know who he is?"

"Why, he gave me his card," and Atten took it from the top of the desk and read, "Kenneth Crane."

"The man about whom I wrote you. The attorney of the minority stockholders."

"The dickens he is! I had forgotten."

"Yes, and now he's down here, posing as a tourist and sticking his nose into every corner of the island. I'm here to talk to you about him. He was visiting your office only to work some spy-game on you.

"Well, if Mr. Crane wants to play the buttinsky, I imagine something will happen to him. But tell me all you know."

Which Carding proceeded to do, telling Atten how the minority stockholders stood, how they had perfected their organization, and how they had delegated full authority to an inner circle, a circle of which Crane was the center. He reminded Atten how often they had sent protests to Honolulu, and he concluded,

"This time I'm sure they have some big scheme on hand, and Crane must be here to carry it through. But just what it is I don't know. On board the steamer I tried to get into his confidence, but he's a clamshell."

Atten studied the matter a minute, and then said, "See here, young man, what are we paying you for?"

"Well, I did the best I could."

"But we want results. Results are what we're paying for. Here we've been carrying your college expenses for a year, and you bring us nothing but vague generalities."

Carding looked so sour at this, that it made Atten pause.

"It never would do to drive him over to the enemy," he thought, and his manner changed. The winsome smile returned.

"Never mind, old man," he said. "You did the best you could, and you've put us on our guard. So those fellows believe they can spoil our game of freeze-out. But, is Crane alone? Has he no one with him?"

"He seems to be alone. One of the professors from the university is down here. He came in the same boat as Crane, and they seem friendly. The professor's name is Burl. But I am sure he is only a tourist."

"Oh, that's the party who is advertising the escape of the Portuguese from the W plantation. What sort of a man is he?"

"He's as harmless as any other college professor. Just let him monopolize the conversation, and that is all he wants. He imagines himself quite a story-teller. He loves to entertain a room-full of company with something like——. Here; I'll give you an illustration."

• "Never mind, John. We'll keep the illustration

for another day. But have he and Crane been running together?"

"Why, no. They seemed to meet more by accident than by design, when they did meet. But Crane and lieutenant Sherrill have been circumnavigating the island. They spent two days on the cruise."

"Two days—and Crane has been here only three!"

"Well, he and Sherrill started off together the morning after Crane's arrival. They gave me the slip completely. I couldn't find out where Crane was, until last night, when I saw him in the hotel. But it was Burl who told me about Crane's cruise, for they had met at different points. Burl thinks Crane is a typical tourist; but, just the same, he hasn't registered at the rooms of the Hawaiian Promotion Committee."

"That may be because he was slow in getting there. I'll call them up," which Atten proceeded to do.

In reply to his inquiry as to whether a Mr. Kenneth Crane, from California, had registered, he was told,

"Yes. He was here this morning. He has just finished making arrangements to join a party of tourists who are going around the island by auto to-morrow. He left the office only a minute ago. Did you want to speak to him?"

"I'll catch him at his hotel. But, about that excursion; is there room for another?"

"We have just one place left."

"Please hold it for a friend of mine—Mr. John

Carding. He'll be in the office to settle for it, inside of ten minutes." and Atten turned to Carding.

"John, I want you to keep right after that fellow. And let me give you a word of advice. When you want a man to tell you things he shouldn't tell, just steer him toward the topic, and get him started talking. Be a little argumentative. Just suggest your arguments in as few words as possible, making it necessary for him to get deeper into the subject in order to justify his own opinions and beliefs. If his suspicions have not been aroused as to your motives, it will surprise you how much he'll give away before he's through."

VI

MOTORING IN THE TROPICS

THREE gigantic sight-seeing cars, loaded with tourists, panted ponderously up a winding road which led through a tropical valley. Crane occupied a place on the front seat of the first machine. John Carding sat directly behind him. And among the passengers in the second machine were professor Burl and party.

Up the valley they went—the valley which lay behind Honolulu and formed a pass through the mountains. On, on, on, ran the road, twining upward at the gentlest possible grade, until the head of the pass was gained and the cars stopped on the brink of a tremendous precipice—the Pali, as the Hawaiians call it.

The travelers from their airy perch gazed out over the brilliant, many-tinted plain which lay below, out to where the ocean rolled upon the coral reef that bordered the shore. For a score of miles beyond they saw the deep blue of the Pacific, dotted with white caps.

The conductor of the party arose and lifted a megaphone to make an announcement. After a few minutes delay they would “cross the island, skirt its eastern coast, traverse half the sugar belt on its northern shore, and then turn southward over the plateau and through the pineapple country. The trip would end with a glimpse of

Pearl Harbor and a look at its rice-fields. Then the machines would dash into Honolulu."

"Dash away," said Crane, and away they dashed. By means of a gallery cut in the cliff the road had been led to the plain below. The machines swept down the grade and around its curves until they reached the lowland, where they were surrounded with all the tropical color and picturesque life of Hawaii.

The machines turned toward the shore. Presently they were racing along the beach. Crane could look back at the mighty mountain-wall, more than half a mile in height, which opposed its vertical front to the trade-wind.

Tapestried and garlanded from base to summit with a glowing mantle of tropical vegetation; seamed and channeled with a thousand colossal wrinkles running from bottom to top, it presented a combination of beauty and sublimity rarely equalled the wide world over.

To Crane this trip was a great adventure. To the others it was only a tourists' excursion. But he was young and imaginative, and here he was, exploring the valleys and shores of this palm-studded, coral-girt island, bent on an enterprise which meant the defeat of opponents whom he might regard as hostile giants. He looked on himself as a modern knight-errant.

Skirting the coast, they reached the northern shore of the island, and turned westward. It was just three hours after their time of starting that the cars stopped before the tourist hotel where Burl and Sherill first had met. On the neighboring

plantation the noon whistles were blowing. The conductor announced a stop of "one hour for lunch."

It was a luxury to descend to terra firma and enjoy a change of position. The dining-room on the verandah was as attractive by day as it had been by twilight. The dainty tables, the clusters of tropical flowers contrasting with the white damask, and then the well-managed luncheon, all seemed ten times as delightful at that remote spot as they would have seemed in a city.

At the conclusion of the meal the travelers lingered, resting in their chairs. Conversation passed from table to table. They seemed like one great family party. The sights and scenes of the journey made the main topic.. Miss Burl was explaining that she had brought a copy of Longfellow's "Evangeline" with her, and that she and the professor had amused themselves on the way, by writing parodies on some of the verses—parodies reflecting the island scenery.

"Won't you read us yours?" asked one. The request was echoed by others. It became general accompanied by hand-clapping. Blushing a little, Miss Burl walked to the edge of the verandah, her note-book in hand. She leaned against the low railing, beside a white pillar. Standing there, in her white sailor-suit with its scarlet neckerchief, the turned-down brim of her light straw hat shading her rosy face, she read:

"This is the land of Hawaii. The cocoanut palm and
the breadfruit,
Waving their graceful fronds that shimmer with green
in the sunlight,

Stand where the ocean breaks on the shore which
lies in their shadow;
Stand like clusters of plumes adorning the tropical
landscape.
Calmed by the coral reef, the dark blue, neighboring
ocean
Glides to the feet of the trees to reflect their forms
in its surface.

"In that bright land of Hawaii the trade-wind always
is blowing,
Soothing with sibilant whispers the dreams of the
island people;
Playing with plumes of palms, or rustling the leaves
of the breadfruit,
While its white clouds are bringing to the volcanic
mountains
Showers which descend their slopes to the deep-
lying tropical valleys,
Filling those valleys with verdure and streams and
profusion and brightness."

When the applause had subsided, professor Burl
was heard explaining that he "didn't believe Miss
B. had been quite fair to Honolulu. Why write
verses about the island," he asked, "and ignore
the city? Now here are the lines that I wrote,"
and, without waiting for an invitation, he leaned
back in his place and read them.

"In that tropical land, a land of scattered islands,
Where the Pacific's blue waves are rolling above the
coral,
Where on the sandy shore the cocoanut palm throws
its shadow,
Where on the fertile plains the plantations of sugar
are growing,
There stands a city whose name recalls a vanishing
language.

"In that delightful land which is washed by the
ocean's blue waters,
Shaded with cocoanut groves and cooled by the
breath of the trade-wind,
Stands on the shore of its harbor the city we call
Honolulu.

There all the air is balm, and the palm is the emblem
of beauty,
And the streets still re-echo the words of a vanishing
language,
As if they fain would appease the people whose
haunts they molested."

One of the guests started to say that some of the professor's lines sounded "more like plagiarism than parody," when the conductor forestalled criticism by announcing that the "machines were ready. All aboard for the pineapple country."

The cars climbed the grade which led to the plateau, the cane-fields opening out a sea of lustrous green below them, and then rolled away to the southward, along a road which ascended slowly and steadily for eight miles. They stopped when they had gained the very summit of the plateau, nine hundred feet above the level of the sea.

Broad, sweeping slopes stretched to the hills miles away on either hand, and on the gentle undulations lay pineapple plantations, covering square mile after square mile with their dark, luxuriant green. Here and there rose canneries and the homes of planters. The yard-high plants were set in mile-long rows. Occasionally the eye might catch a glimpse of the arrangement, but for the most part the plants merged into a sea of verdure which blended with the darker green of the tree-covered hills to the east. The mountains to the west were comparatively high and bare. At one point they were notched by a deep gap which resembled on a smaller scale the opening at the head of the valley behind Honolulu.

"We call it 'The Gap,'" the conductor of the excursion explained. "It's a pass through the western range. There's a road running through it, from here to the west coast. A man can follow it on foot or on horse-back, and some think that the view westward through 'The Gap' beats the view from the Pali."

"Is there a precipice on the farther side?" asked Crane.

"Not precisely a precipice, but the ground falls away very steeply, and the pass is higher than the Pali; about three hundred feet higher, for it is fifteen hundred feet above sea level."

They had turned aside from the main road now, so that the machine might tour a plantation and circle a cannery. The conductor was spouting a stream of facts and figures relating to the industry.

"How far is it from here to the west coast?" asked Crane, when he had an opportunity.

"Oh, about twelve miles."

"It's two o'clock now. I could walk across and be there by six, easily. Could I get a train to Honolulu at that hour?"

"You could to-day. They're running specials."

"I believe I'll do it. Anything special on the way?"

"There's a coffee plantation at the head of the valley, as soon as you have passed the Gap. And there's a sugar plantation at the lower end."

Crane remembered the plantation on the west coast, which he and Sherrill had seen from the Firefly.

"Good! As soon as we turn into the main road,

I believe I'll jump down and strike out to the west. No chance of getting lost, is there?"

"No, indeed! There's a plain road, and only one road, all the way."

Consequently, when the cars were ready to resume their course to Honolulu, Crane climbed out with the intention of finishing the trip alone. He looked westward along the way which he must follow. Just then he heard a voice at his elbow.

"You don't mind if I keep you company. I couldn't help hearing your talk with the conductor, and I decided to follow your lead."

John Carding stood there. His lean face was relaxed into its nearest approach to an amiable smile. And for once Crane was inclined to welcome his company. New to the island, he felt some slight uncertainty about his ability to find his way.

"Good enough," he answered. "We'll walk together. I suppose you're familiar with this road. You're a native of this island, aren't you?"

"Yes, I'm a native, even if my parents are white. And I've been over this road often enough. When I was a high school boy, we used to organize walking trips clear around the island."

"I was a little surprised to see you in a tourists' excursion."

"Oh, I'm run down; feeling seedy. The doctor advised the open air, and, as my father doesn't own a machine, he advised me to take this trip. But I'm glad to shake that bunch. I listened to enough twaddle to last me for a year. And that poetry at the lunch table, that was the limit!"

"I'm afraid we're going to disagree, already, Mr.

Carding. The verses sounded good to me. In fact, those people followed the original so closely in places, that they could hardly spoil it."

"Well, I guess there's nothing poetical about me. At least, I can't see anything to it when the verses mention nothing but a lot of stupid trees, standing in the dirt. Cocoa-palms and breadfruit! Might as well write about lamp-posts and garbage-cans, for all I can see," from which it is evident that Carding had been born without any sense of grace or beauty. All the glories of God's great universe were lost on him.

"Now, if they had mentioned beer," he went on, "or if someone wrote a poem in praise of Manhattan cocktails, I might see something in it. Why, the great English poet, Byron, wrote in praise of beer. I have the lines in my note-book." He produced the note-book and ran over its pages. "Here they are," and he read:—

"For after years of travel by a bard in
Countries of greater heat but lesser suction,
A green field is a sight which makes him pardon
The absence of that more sublime construction,
Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,
Glaciers, volcanoes, oranges and ices.
And when I think upon a pot of beer—
But I won't weep!——"

"It seems to me, I might write poetry on that topic myself," he went on. For half an hour Crane heard him mumbling and muttering to himself, as they walked up the long steady rise which led to the Gap. Then he exploded with this little lyric gem.

"Home isn't near. I fear

"I'll get no beer. That's clear."

Crane reserved his opinion.

"In former times, many poets wrote in praise of beer," he answered, "although that sort of verse has gone out of fashion lately. In *Evangeline*, Longfellow mentions the 'nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village of Grand-Pre.' And he goes on to describe how the notary 'lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare. Wiping the foam from his lips, he solemnly bowed and departed!'"

"Good! I must make a note of that," and Carding scribbled in his note-book. "I suppose they'll be turning *Evangeline* out of the schools next, on the ground that it teaches intemperance."

Presently he went on. "There's another sentiment which appeals to me, in those lines which I copied from Byron, where he says 'a green field is a sight which makes him pardon the absence of that more sublime construction.' The prettiest scenery that ever I saw was a green field. I'll tell you about it.

"During one of my summer vacations, while I was attending college, I had gone east to Chicago. I had travelled by the Santa Fe, and the last I remembered of California was the San Joaquin valley, with its sand and dust and jack-rabbits; everything barren and sun-scorched; the only signs of life, out in the country, were those long-eared rabbits, crouching in the fields or jumping into the air. You know what that country is like in July, after the crops are in.

"Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, were no better.

But, when we drew near to Chicago, how delightful everything looked. It had been raining only a few hours before—less than that, I guess—for the rain-clouds still hung in the sky and the drops glittered on the clover. We ran between great, deep fields of red clover, where the cattle stood to their knees,—and how good those fields looked! No stupid palm-trees there, standing in a lot of coral sand, with the wind slapping their branches about. Everywhere I saw rich fertility and freshness, peace and prosperity. Why, Mr. Crane, I never saw anything more delightful in my life. I'll admit I may be a little blind to scenery, but for once I saw something delightful to look at.

"I believe that when Byron wrote those lines about a green field, he was comparing Greece with England. You know Greece has a climate very similar to that of California; so they say. I guess he compared the green fields of old England with dusty Greece, very much as I compared the clover fields of Illinois with the dusty plains of California."

"The fellow can thaw out, on occasion," thought Crane, but he only said,

"Plenty of green fields in California in the spring."

"Yes, the grain-fields; I know," answered Carding. "But they never appealed to me like those Illinois clover-fields."

"Isn't the secret of it this:—that the unusual and unfamiliar arouse and interest," suggested Crane. "To Californians the idea of a deep grassy field without irrigation in the summer time, is

startling; while to people from Chicago, a palm-tree is a phenomenon."

"Perhaps that is the explanation. But, speaking of a phenomenon, let me tell you another thing they have in Illinois. It's a curiosity. It's a sort of mosquito."

"Plenty of them here."

"Yes, but this variety doesn't sting."

"Good! It must be a curiosity."

"And it has a sort of electric light attachment, like an electric torch, on a very small scale. You see them flashing over the fields after dark. They call them lightning-bugs, or fireflies."

"Oh, fireflies! Yes, I've read of them."

"Well, they surely do make a fellow sit up and take notice. But—a palm-tree. Why, a palm-tree is just a palm-tree, and that's all there is to it. But, a firefly; that's a phenom."

Crane nodded, and thought to himself, "He seems a harmless sort of a fellow, with his chatter about clover-fields and fireflies."

So they went, walking and talking, until they came to the Gap. They had climbed six hundred feet since leaving the machine, but the ascent had been so gradual that only in the last half mile had it been noticeable. Now they looked down a broad valley to the distant sea.

What a contrast the view presented to the one they had had that morning from the Pali. It's true they stood at the top of a declivity so steep that the impression was that of being on the brink of a tremendous precipice, but there the analogy ceased. Whereas the eastern side of the

island, which they had overlooked from the Pali, behind Honolulu, was rendered brilliant by tropical vegetation, the plain being covered with green, while the great perpendicular cliffs were matted with trailing vines or groves of kukui trees, clustering at their feet, or following up the ravines which channeled them; here the vegetation was that of the desert. The hills were great piles of dark volcanic rock, supporting, if they supported anything, only the stunted latana or the prickly cactus, which blended with their environment so as to produce at a distance the effect of no vegetation at all.

It is true that a large portion of the plain had been reclaimed from its natural condition, and by artificial means, by irrigation, had been turned into riotous fields of sugar-cane. But the cane-fields, although they covered square miles, only showed as a bright patch on the valley floor. On either hand rose great walls of black rock, dreary, forbidding, and utterly desolate. When this old world shall approach its last day: when its ability to support life shall have almost ceased; when the sun shall have dwindled to a brilliant star, then will such scenes of desolation and despair be common, but not before. If the view from the Pali, behind Honolulu, might be described as a "dream," that from the Gap should be described as a "nightmare."

With some such sentiments as these, Crane contemplated the landscape. Presently they started to descend into the valley. The trail ran in zig-zag fashion. Here, under the shadow of

the cliff, the ground was not so desolate as elsewhere. Tall ferns were waving by the wayside.

A snowy tropic-bird fluttered overhead, its scarlet beak and two long scarlet feathers showing in vivid contrast with its white plumage.

As they went, Carding was racking his wits for a plan to set Crane talking.

"So far, I have been doing all the talking myself," he thought. "Oh, he's a clam. But why not arrange it so that we stop over for the night at the plantation. Only give me time, and I'll get him started," and he began to delay from time to time, to point out one object of interest after another. Presently they were traversing the valley-floor. The road began to run between fields of cane. Carding indicated the different camps, where the laborers were segregated by races—the Chinese camp, the Japanese camp, the Portuguese camp, the Korean camp, each camp a village of white-washed cottages. He indicated the mill where the cane was ground, and the pumping station which pumped artesian water to irrigate the fields. And he never failed to give his companion an opportunity to express his opinions.

But sugar cultivation was a novelty to Crane, in spite of his visit to the W plantation. Very unfamiliar with its practical side, he was eager to ask questions, and to learn, rather than to express opinions. And when they arrived at the end of the valley, and entered the little station to learn that the last train had gone, he was delighted to fall in with Carding's suggestion that they stop over for a day.

"I'm acquainted with one of the engineers," Carding explained. "I'm sure he'll take us in for the night."

The engineer was a sociable soul, delighted to entertain visitors who had come so recently from the mainland.

"It's five years since I've been there," he explained, and he was eager to hear all that they told of California.

It was fascinating for Crane to find himself suddenly put in complete touch with the isolated life of a plantation. As he listened to the engineer's naive questions regarding the outside world, he began to share his point of view. The singularity and seclusion of the place, its exotic tone, struck him with all their force. There they were, in a remote valley of a volcanic island, surrounded by deep fields of cane, while thousands of miles of ocean lay between that island and the outer world.

All next morning they drifted over the plantation, and as they went Crane began to talk freely. His companion proved invaluable as a guide, so that a spirit of companionship began to grow between them.

"You spoke about feeling seedy, Mr. Carding," he said. "Well, I've been feeling seedy for the past six months, but business tied me down. However, I broke the strings at last, and came for this voyage. I tell you, it has been just the thing for me. The ocean and the island between them, with their change of air and scenes, are making me feel like a boy once more. My experience has not been like that of the man who

spent his vacation at Santa Catalina, and came home, saying, 'I went to Catalina for change and rest, but the hotel keepers got most of my change, and the waiters got the rest.'

Carding simulated intense appreciation of the joke, and then ventured,

"If the island suits you so well, and sugar culture interests you so much, why not settle here and become a sugar-planter?"

"I'm afraid the returns from the business are too slow," answered Crane, and then he went on, "I know something about it, for I already have a little money invested in a plantation."

"He's talking at last," thought Carding, but he preserved a tactful silence while Crane continued,

"Ten years ago I bought a little stock in the X Sugar Company, and I have not received a dividend from it so far."

"That's a shame!"

"Oh, I don't know. You see, the profits are being spent in development work; buying and planting additional land. When that work comes to its natural conclusion, the dividends will be something enormous. What's the use of being dissatisfied when I shall get ten dollars for every dollar I don't receive now?"

"But I understand that the officers of the X company are getting rich, just the same. I guess all the money doesn't go into development work."

"Oh, so long as they are making a success of the plantation, it wouldn't do to grudge them their pay and expenses. To successfully handle a big property, is not easy. They deserve all they get."

Carding's suspicions of Crane's mission were being lulled to sleep.

"The fellow knows nothing about the practical working of a plantation," Carding thought. "And he doesn't understand the game of freeze-out which is being played on him. I guess he's harmless."

Further conversation only confirmed this opinion, and when they boarded the train, Carding decided that he had done enough work for one day.

"I'll amuse myself with a book," he thought.

He inspected the train-boy's stock of novels. "The Doom of the Demon Band" did not appeal to him; neither did "Dogged in Newfoundland." But he dipped into "Red Men and Rubber." The author had made a frantic effort to write a "best-seller," with a result which was more frantic than saleable, but a sentence caught Carding's eye—"Once more that yelling maddened mob of people galloped across the deck for life-preservers, grappled with each other to get at the boats, and fell pell-mell in kicking, wriggling heaps."

"This looks pretty good," and he bought the book. He buried his nose in it all the way to Honolulu.

They had taken the regular afternoon train, which would arrive in Honolulu about the time of sunset. As they went, Crane looked out of the window with eager interest, for this was his first experience of railway travel in the Hawaiian Islands. He was traveling through territory which previously he had only glimpsed from a distance.

High, razor-backed promontories descended to the blue sea, leaving only a narrow shelf where the

rails might run. Between those promontories were deep rocky valleys. But soon the hills subsided to the plain. They descended with a long graceful slope, broken only in places with volcanic cones. The train turned eastward towards Pearl Harbor.

The rails ran through a land of sugar-cane and hemp. Occasionally they passed a sugar-mill, with its white-washed walls and high black stack and its villages for laborers, the cottages standing in long white rows. At one point, a cane-field was burning. The flames—which even under the full glare of the tropical sun, showed an intense and rosy red—seemed to be destroying everything before them. Yet all they did was to burn away the leaves, while the canes remained unharmed for the cutting.

The train skirted the northern end of Pearl Harbor, and turned down its eastern shore. All along the margin were rice-fields, flooded with water, and dotted with the young plants. Farm-houses with their shade-trees rose like little islands in the flood. Farther out, on the salt water of the Harbor, the white sails of yachts or the white sides of motor-launches could be seen. To eastward the long slopes of the hills rose high and green, crowned with a great white roll of clouds, from which little detached clouds floated to speckle the blue sky.

Now they were approaching Honolulu. Crane sat on the landward side of the train, and watched the hills. Valley after valley kept opening before him, valleys filled with tropical verdure and affording vistas that stretched to the heart of the hills. And

at last the deepest of all opened out, the valley which lay directly behind the harbor of Honolulu, and he saw the stupendous V at its upper end, notching the mountains to their core. Above that opening there hung a great pearl-white cloud, reflecting all the brightness of the western sun. His eye dwelt on the steep walls of the gorge, clothed with the many tints of the tropical forest, and to his mind came the voluptuous lines of Byron:

"Where the tints of the earth and the hues of the sky,
In color though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of Ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine."

VII

PLOTS AND COUNTERPLOTS

THE hotel dining-room made a brilliant showing, for it was vivid with flowers and sparkling with lights which were flashed back by mirrors and by the cut-glass and silver on the damask-covered tables. Behind one of the French-plate windows Carding was seated at a little table which was covered with an immaculate cloth and brightened with a great cluster of crimson poppies,—for Honolulu poppies bloom in April. A waiter was bringing his order.

It was a thick and juicy steak, done to a turn. And the waiter was inquiring whether Carding would have a cup of coffee with it. "Coffee grown in the Islands, sir" he added. He mistook the young man for a tourist.

Carding dismissed the suggestion with contempt. "Not on your life," he snapped. "I never drink coffee, and if I did, I wouldn't touch the poison they grow in this island. Bring me beer," and then he added, "Bring imported beer. I don't want the slop they brew in Honolulu."

Half a dozen tourists at the next table were listening with interest. Carding had raised his voice to a pitch which made it impossible for them not to hear.

"A nice booster for the Islands is that fellow," the waiter commented in the kitchen, a minute

later. "He says Hawaiian coffee is poison and Hawaiian beer is slop. Well, I'll give him Japanese beer, made out of the Lord knows what."

But, whatever its origin, it looked well with its deep golden-yellow color, as Carding poured it slowly and carefully so as to cause no foam. And the steak was better still. It was thick and juicy, crisp and brown outside, pink within where Carding cut a slice. He was lifting a piece to his mouth when he realized that someone was staring at him through the plate-glass of the window.

The man who was peering in through the window, had a complexion precisely the color of chocolate, for he was a Hawaiian. Hawaiians are an improvident race, and this representative was a living exemplification of improvidence. His coat was full of holes; so were his shoes. His battered straw hat no longer had a crown. It's true he did not "shiver in the wintry wind," for the evening air was deliciously soft. But he eyed Carding's steak with a wolfish glare that told of a vacuum beneath his belt.

Carding grinned; "Here, have some, old man," holding the piece of steak to the window, within six inches of the Hawaiian's mouth. Then he transferred it slowly to his own, chewing rapturously. He cut off other pieces in rapid succession, lifting each in plain view, lingering an instant before putting it in his mouth, then chewing with every evidence of gratification.

"Have a drink, old man?" he asked, and he casually lifted a great goblet of the golden beer,

held it so that the light might play upon it for a minute, then slowly tilted it towards his own lips, and drank deeply.

"Here's some for you," and he held the empty glass to the window.

Oh, how the Hawaiian followed the fate of each juicy bit of steak! How his mouth watered as he watched the beer

Carding grew reflective.

"It reminds me of what professor Burl was saying about contrast as a sharpener of appreciation," he thought. "Here I am, well dressed, with money in my pocket, in a comfortable dining-room, and eating just the meal I want. And I can enjoy it a hundred times better when I see that mutt outside, envying me for every mouthful that I swallow. I doubt if ever I enjoyed a meal half so well," and he turned to tantalize the Hawaiian further.

But the tourists at the adjoining table had been watching this combination of comedy and tragedy. One of them had called a waiter.

"Here, waiter," he said quietly, "just give this quarter to that poor devil that's looking in through the window." When Carding turned to continue his game, he was only in time to see the man getting the money and scurrying off to spend it.

But the scowl which was developing on his face, gave way to a smile of welcome. Frank Atten was passing. Their eyes met. Carding rose eagerly in his place, and beckoned, at the same time pointing to an empty chair before him.

Atten hesitated for an instant. Then he nodded, and turned toward the entrance. A minute later he was sitting at Carding's table.

"How comes it you're not eating dinner at home?" he asked.

"I just got back from that trip this evening," Carding answered, "and I found that my people had accepted an invitation to go out to dinner. They were gone, and I had to come down town, if I wanted anything to eat. But I'd like to speak about our friend."

"Is this a good place to talk?"

"Would it make any difference if he knew we were right after him?"

"No; I guess he's the one who needs to cover up his tracks; not we. Well, did the machines break down? You say you only got back this evening."

"No break-down. We left the party. He climbed out while we were in the pineapple country, and struck out through the Gap for the west coast. Of course, I joined him. It gave me just the chance I wanted. I started talking about any old thing, so that he shouldn't think I was trying to pump him, and I delayed him on the road so that he would miss the last train for Honolulu. Then we stopped overnight at the plantation, and I pried his clam-shell open at last. But I think he's harmless. He talked as though he were perfectly satisfied with the situation,—and he knows nothing about the business side of sugar. When I suggested that we stop over at the plantation to see its methods, he was as tickled as a small boy with a

new kite. You should have heard some of the questions he asked, while they were showing him around."

"Yes. Maybe he's green, or maybe he's deep."

"Then he gave the best imitation of a green man ever I saw."

"But what excuse did he give for leaving the party and hiking over the hills? I never before heard of a tourist doing anything like that."

"Said he wanted to see the scenery. Oh, he has scenery on the brain—he and the Burls, between them. I think he's a little off."

"Well, it's a pretty good thing for the Islands, John, that there are such people as Crane and the Burls. If everyone had your idea about Hawaiian scenery, the tourist business would be dead in a week. However, that's aside from the subject; let's get back to business. You feel pretty certain Crane's not in the Islands to make trouble?"

"From all present indications, that's the way I feel."

"Well, just keep an eye on him, in a general way, so that you know what he's doing. And meanwhile, my yard-boy's keeping tab on that bunch of Japs who are waiting for orders from our California friends. I pay him an extra dollar each week, and he interviews them every day. They think he hates me. Oh, I imagine we have the situation under control," and Frank Atten pressed a broad thumb upon the table, reducing an imaginary mosquito to tissue. But "there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

While this conversation was going on in the

dining-room, Crane and lieutenant Sherrill were in conference in Crane's room, on the fourth floor. The lieutenant rested in a rocking-chair, his long legs stretched out before him, while he listened to Crane's explanations and questions. The Californian was describing how he had occupied his time during the last three days.

"I've now spent five days in studying the island," he said "And I feel less competent to go on without advice than I did the day I landed."

"The island doesn't look quite so small as it did at first, even if it is only thirty-five miles long?"

"No, sir, it does not, and it certainly is tremendously complex. But the more I see of it, the more it fascinates me. You have a magnificent island here, lieutenant, and I envy you for being permanently located in it. In fact, if my plans go through successfully, I should like to locate here myself."

"But, at present, do you think you know the island well enough for your purpose?"

"Not quite. Just a little more 'study of local conditions.' Let me explain what I have in mind for to-morrow. I'd like your advice."

"Good! Go ahead."

"So far, I've been looking at the island from below. Now, I want to look at it from above. I want to climb a mountain; one which is centrally situated, and which will give me a bird's-eye view down into a number of valleys. I'm interested in valleys—no matter why. Of course, I might spend a week in exploring valley after valley. But in this way I can study a dozen at once and pick

the most promising. Now, as regards the mountains, I have had my eye on the two peaks which overlook the Pali. Is there a trail to the top of either one?"

"There's a trail to the top of each."

"Fine! And which would you advise me to ascend?"

"Well, the one on the southern side is the higher. In fact, it's the highest peak in the eastern range. But—I think the view from the one on the northern side is more comprehensive. The peak is more central. And the trail is not so long. That's the one I advise. However, let me warn you right here; when you go, take a rubber coat with you. When I climbed that peak, showers nearly drowned me. It may be clear in Honolulu, and the rain may be falling at the rate of an inch an hour up there."

"If only I could pick a day when it doesn't rain."

"We have to take our chances. The thing to do, is to start early. You may get to the top before the rain commences. But let me make a suggestion. We have a number of aeroplanes at the Fort. They are biplanes of the latest and safest model. We staff officers have been learning to drive them, and they call me pretty expert. There would be nothing to prevent me from taking you up in my machine. You might make an ascent with me, instead of climbing the hills."

For a moment the offer appealed to Crane as most tempting. In the "Advertiser" he had seen an account of the machines—"big war-planes of great size and amazing stability, measuring

seventy feet from tip to tip, and carrying motors capable of developing 400 horse-power." But he recollected an illustration which the paper had printed, of the "examination of applicants for enrollment in the aviation corps,"—an illustration which had shown the applicant strapped in a revolving chair, his head fastened back. The explanatory paragraph had stated that the chair was revolved swiftly several times, when the man was examined for vertigo,—required to find the attending physician's finger, if he could. Obviously aeroplaning was a strenuous affair. Crane began to make excuses.

"Of course, I'm tremendously obliged to you, lieutenant," he said, "but I've never been up in one of those things. I understand that a green man, on his first trip, finds the motion, noise and novelty so distracting that his ideas are quite confused. I guess——"

"Come to think of it, you're quite right, Mr. Crane," the officer answered. "Let's get back to hill-climbing. I was cautioning you against the rain. Next point; the trail is bad and is partly overgrown with brush. If you want to save yourself, take some Japs with you. Arm them with cane-knives or hatchets to chop brush. Those fellows can chop nearly as fast as they can walk.

"Another point; if you want to get to the top fresh and unwearied, hire two Japs to carry you in a mountain-chair. The chair is a swinging seat, hung on bamboo poles. You sit on the swinging seat, the Japs take the poles on their shoulders, and carry you up the trail at a dog-trot. You enjoy the

landscape as you go, instead of spending your time mopping perspiration."

"Good! I'll have four hatchetmen and two chairmen. One more question, lieutenant; where shall I hire the men?"

"Oh, there are a number of Japanese employment agencies. But I thought you spoke of a crew of Japanese who are waiting for you."

"So I did; but I don't want to communicate with those men at present."

"Have you a suspicion you're being watched?"

"I have. If I see them now, I——"

"Might give the whole game away."

"But if I continue to pose as a green and eccentric tourist,——"

"With a tremendous appetite for Hawaiian scenery,——"

"I stand a chance to turn suspicion away from me altogether. For this trip I had better hire men from an agency."

"Then you'll find some good offices on Beretania street, north of Fort. I don't know anything about them individually, but all are reliable. And in engaging men you'll need to tell them the name of the peak you want to climb. It's a native name, of course. I'll give to you in writing." Which the lieutenant proceeded to do.

"You seem to be going into this business in a most systematic manner, Mr. Crane," he added.

"You know what Marcus Aurelius said," answered Crane. "'Let nothing be done rashly and at random, but all things according——'"

"To the most exact and perfect rules of art."

Which reminds me to inquire whether you have decided on a definite program in this business."

"I have, and I can put it very briefly. I've known from the first there was no use in trying to handle the case here in Honolulu. But, you know, there are many points in this island that are seldom visited. As soon as I've picked a definite place, I'll induce the men we're after to visit it—no matter how—I don't want to draw you into this too far. Then, with the help of this crew of Japanese who are waiting for me, I shall proceed to persuade them by methods I have called 'a little novel'. Once they're cornered and scared, they'll soon see the error of their ways; or we'll hold them till they do. The whole business will amount to no more than a huge practical joke, but it will bring the results we want. As soon as I've picked a suitable spot, action begins."

"You'll fight fire with fire?"

"Yes. In dealing with men of a certain stamp, legal measures frequently fail. I am sorry to have to use underhanded methods, but we are only trying to get what belongs to us, and circumstances compel us to use means which are a little novel."

"Decidedly novel," the lieutenant thought, as he rose, but he only nodded and said "Good night."

As Sherrill walked down the street, he puffed a meditative cigar.

"I like Crane. He's a good fellow," he thought, "and he's tremendously enthusiastic over this plan."

But it seems quixotic to me. His plan is one that looks easy on paper, but only on paper. There ought to be some way of settling the matter without starting a guerilla war. I don't want to see Crane get into trouble. I think I'll have a talk with the president of the X Company," and he stepped into a store, where he called up the president's home.

"He left here just after dinner," came the answer. "He was on his way to the Cosmos Club. I think you'll find him there."

"That's only around the corner," thought Sherrill as he hung up. "I'll have that talk this evening."

VIII

THE PRESIDENT OF THE COSMOS CLUB

AS SHERRILL approached the club, he saw a heavy limousine waiting at the curb. With its gray hood, gray body and gray tires, it seemed a symphony in gray. Sherrill recognized the initials on the panel as those of the president of the X Sugar Company.

"He's here," he thought, and entered the club-house.

The entrance to the Cosmos Club of Honolulu was a massive granite portal, ponderous with doors of polished bronze, for the club-house stood in the down-town district. Its ground-floor was occupied by stores. Within the short hall there was an elevator, and a broad marble staircase with great brass handrails leading to the second floor.

The lounging-room of the club was on that floor—a glorious room, with dark panelled walls and deep window-seats and windows studded with little diamond panes that had a golden-yellow tint. Thick curtains draped the windows, which were only open sufficiently to allow the trade-wind to circulate. Even at noon only a mellow twilight filled the place—a vague light showing deep rocking-chairs upholstered in leather, and gorgeous rugs and round tables where stood bouquets of crimson poppies. The tone of the room was dark and massive, with just enough color from windows

and flowers and rugs and a few oil-paintings in gilded frames, to relieve the rest. An air of elegance hung over everything.

A servant conducted Sherrill to a seat in this room, and carried his card to the president. Yes, the president was at liberty. Would Mr. Sherrill step into the library?

Within the club library, leaning back in a deep rocking-chair, the president sat, an open volume in his hand, for he was a man who loved reading. And his reading was of a substantial type. History was his favorite field. The volume engaging his attention that evening was "Civilization at the Crossroads."

He was president of the Cosmos Club, as well as of the X Sugar Company. An elderly man, his hair was gray. His closely-cropped side-whiskers were gray. He was not very tall, and was comfortably plump. He habitually wore a blue serge suit, with no vest, the short coat thrown open. His appearance recalled so vividly a popular cartoon that he was known behind his back as "Foxy Grandpa."

If he was a "malefactor of great wealth," he looked the "wealth," but not the "malefactor." His expression was mild, and his tone in conversation philosophical. In debate he would have loved to produce citations to prove that the money which had been given to Carding's beggar, had been given most unwisely.

He could afford to view all questions philosophically, for he was well satisfied with his lot in life. The world had treated him handsomely, at last.

He had a delightful home in Honolulu's most delightful suburb. He had a peace-loving family. His motor-car pleased him. Being president of the Cosmos Club pleased him better. In short, his home, his club, his automobile and his books, provided him with all that his heart desired. When lieutenant Sherrill entered, he rose with a most benevolent air.

Sherrill, while not a member of the club, had been a welcome guest on many occasions. Although not intimate with the president, he felt no hesitation in approaching him.

"Welcome to our city," the president was saying. "Have a chair, Sherrill," and he indicated a luxurious rocker. "And will you have a cigar?" offering his cigar-case.

The lieutenant mentally discounted the effusiveness, and decided to get down to business at once.

"I'd like to say a few words to you in regard to the X Sugar Company," he explained, as he took the rocker.

"The Sugar Company?" and the president's tone was politely interrogative. "I believe that everything is well with us."

"Well, I want to explain that I did not come here to give offense, or to be unkind; but, if everything is prosperous, why not declare a dividend?"

"Simply because we are putting all of the proceeds into development work. We are buying and planting additional acreage. But when that development work comes to its natural conclusion, just think what a magnificent piece of property we shall have! The dividends you don't get now, will

come in, multiplied by ten. But, if you are pinched for money, lieutenant, I think we can arrange an advance. The day for dividends is bound to come soon."

The lieutenant reflected, "It's no use telling him that he is trying to freeze out the minority stockholders, because he knows that already. I'll try him on humanitarian grounds," and he recollected Crane's argument.

"No, sir," he answered. "I did not come here with any personal motive. My means are quite sufficient. But, in California there are two hundred Americans who bought the company's stock when first it was put upon the market. Their money made possible the launching of the enterprise. It seems to me you should go a little slower with the development work, setting aside a certain share of the proceeds for an annual dividend. When two hundred hard-working men have furnished the capital which made it possible to carry out an enterprise, don't you think they deserve something more in return than an opportunity to sell out for half what they gave? At present those people are excited over the situation. They are tremendously indignant. Now, if you will change the policy of the company, if you will insist upon its paying dividends, you will be the hero of the hour. You will earn their undying gratitude."

Here was a topic to debate. The president became philosophical, at once. He had a citation at hand from the volume he had been reading.

"It doesn't pay to do things for humanity," he announced. "Consider the case of Alexander the

Great. He was a great organizer. He planned to make the world over. But does the world admire him? I don't think so."

"Kindly explain what Alexander did for humanity?"

"To do that, I shall have to show you first what his father did, for Alexander followed in the footsteps of his father, Philip. Philip unified Greece. He organized it under one stable government. He found it a lot of petty tribes or states, waging petty wars, the one on the other. He put a stop to all that, and left the country united and peaceful."

"Yes, but how did he do it?"

"He did it by war, of course. But, granting that some men were killed when Philip unified Greece, the number was insignificant when compared with the number who had lost their lives in the strife between the individual Greek states. When Philip had finished his work, a Greek could go to sleep at night, sure that when he woke up in the morning he would find a roof over his head. Previously, it had been doubtful whether even the head would be left him.

"I say that Alexander followed in his father's footsteps, for he undertook to unify the whole world. Philip had been a retailer in the business. Alexander proposed to be a wholesaler. Alexander's idea was that no longer should men be divided into Greeks and barbarians, but that all men should be Greeks. The object of all his campaigns was to establish Greek civilization and Greek culture—art, science and literature—wherever he went."

"Alexander the Great a patron of science!" the lieutenant interrupted. "That sounds like describing an Apache chief as a collector of Old Masters."

"Nevertheless, the records show it. As a boy, Alexander was a pupil of the Greek scientist, Aristotle. Later, when king, he detailed a thousand men throughout Greece and Western Asia with instructions to follow out the directions of Aristotle in collecting specimens and studying the habits of fishes, birds, beasts and insects. That has a civilized sound, hasn't it? And after Alexander had made himself master of Egypt, and had founded the city of Alexandria, he built a great university in that city, to propagate Greek culture. Professor Euclid was selected as the head of the department of mathematics. And professor Euclid wrote a text-book of geometry, which has remained the model for works of that sort down to the present day. It forms the foundation of all our modern texts.

"Now to get down to my argument. Do we find Alexander held up to admiration as a patron of art, science and literature? as a builder of universities, as one who sought to make culture world-wide? Are Euclid's Elements pointed out as a monument to his memory? On the contrary, isn't Alexander commonly mentioned as we might mention an Apache chief on the war-path? His ever-victorious Greeks are regarded as no better than a band of marauding Indians. The story of his life is told as the story of a succession of military campaigns, a succession of raids for plunder. No word is said of the plan and purpose

behind those campaigns. Or, if a word is said, that word is not uttered very loudly."

"Well, I'd rather have been Alexander the Great, and shoulder his bad reputation, than have been a speculating Macedonian army-contractor."

"Granted, lieutenant But the fact remains that Alexander's reputation with the general public is that of a man who fought for glory, plunder and power; not that of a man who sought to advance civilization. Try to get anyone to take the broader view and you'll have an uphill task before you."

"Very true; but I see you have to go back to ancient history for your arguments."

"Well, let's come down to modern history. I'll give you a modern instance," and the president laid aside "Civilization at the Crossroads," and leaned back in his deep leather chair, while he puffed out a great aromatic cloud, and let his eyes linger on a graceful cluster of pink and crimson poppies filling the brass jardiniere on the center-table.

"Consider Mr. Harriman," he continued. "When Edward H. Harriman took over the Union Pacific line, the 'great American lemon,' as it was called, that road had a record of rottenness and failure hardly equalled in the annals of American rail-roading. For thirty years the government had been trying to collect the debt due from the road. So far, not a cent had been collected. Under Harriman's management, that debt was honestly paid, principal and interest, aggregating forty-five millions of dollars. Ten years later he had the Union Pacific on a ten per cent dividend paying

basis. And he had the Southern Pacific paying dividends for the first time in its history.

"Now, there was a man who got results for the shareholders. In all the vast expenditures of his empire of railroads the charge of graft was unknown. Yet Harriman's financial methods were assailed bitterly. He was hardly what you would call a popular idol.

"In the United States we have marble monuments to the memory of men who led a few thousands or a few tens of thousands of men in war. But, did you ever hear of a grateful public proposing to build a monument to the memory of Edward H. Harriman? And yet he commanded an industrial army of one hundred and fourteen thousand men, and in the conduct of his roads he planned and pushed through projects as big as the building of the pyramids of Egypt."

"Then you would suggest that the Logan statue in Chicago, representing General Logan waving a battle-flag from the back of a war-horse, should be replaced with a marble monument of Harriman on the driver's seat of a four-in-hand."

"It's easy for you to make my argument sound absurd, lieutenant. Yet, I've seen men look much more ridiculous on the hurricane-deck of a cavalry skate than ever they did on that of a four-in-hand."

"Well, we need not be acrimonious about it."

"Very true, lieutenant. But, broadly speaking, the ingratitude of republics is proverbial, which is only another way of saying that the public is ungrateful. E. H. Hariman reconstructed railway systems, inspired colossal engineering enterprises,

left magnificent railways where he had found the worst in the United States. And while doing all that, he saw to it that generous dividends were paid to the stockholders. He was just the sort of a man you would like me to be. Yet the best name the public had for him was 'undesirable citizen.' I tell you, it doesn't pay to do things for humanity, lieutenant,—it doesn't pay," and the president leaned back in his chair, with an air of complete finality.

Sherrill watched him in silence for a moment.

"Philosophy is a great friend and a fine thing when you are master of the situation," he thought. "But I wonder how much his philosophy would help him if those people had him in their power. I wonder what line of argument he will follow if Crane starts to administer that 'physical suasion,' of which he spoke."

"Perhaps it doesn't pay in the way you mention," the lieutenant said. "Perhaps people are suspicious of their friends and forgetful of favors, although I believe that a great deal of that sort of thing is due to sheer misunderstanding. But let us look at the question from another viewpoint. Harriman's methods certainly paid in dollars and cents. He himself died worth seventy-one millions. And his railway lines were wonderfully prosperous. The more money that was spent in building them up and in paying dividends to stockholders, the greater were the net profits. Harriman's business-sense showed itself in his ability to see that, in order to make money out of

a business, you must put money into that business."

"Your argument is partly right and partly wrong, lieutenant. We are putting money into the plantation, all the time. We are putting in all of the proceeds, and we are spending that money on legitimate expansion. But if we spent the money in paying dividends which need not be paid; or in paying higher wages to laborers who are willing to work for less, I don't see how that would build up the business."

"Possibly, if laborers were treated more liberally, they would give better service."

"I can't see it. That sort of thing is being tried on this island, and it is not giving results. Why, on the Kahuku plantation the laborers' camp is like a park. Their homes are like those of old retainers on a big English estate. Yet they don't work any better than our men."

"For another instance, look at the W plantation. There the quarters were rebuilt completely, using tongue and groove instead of rough siding. The new quarters were neatly finished and dressed on the inside. The exteriors were painted instead of being white-washed. And what was the result? Why, last week their whole Portuguese camp ran away. One hundred men, with their wives and families, left the plantation in the height of the season. There's gratitude for you! There's appreciation for you!

"Now, on the X plantation, we pride ourselves on being conservative. Our quarters for laborers are long lines of sheds with earthen floors. Some

of our critics have gone so far as to say that our mules have better quarters than our men. Perhaps, in a way, they have. But, consider what those people were used to before they came here. In Portugal, mud floors are the rule with the poorer people. In China, mud floors are found in the homes of many who are comparatively well-to-do. Why, that sort of thing comes natural to that sort of people. They can't be happy without it. Give them civilized homes, and they don't know what to do with them."

The lieutenant said nothing. Argument with such a man was a waste of breath.

The president rose. "Forget it, lieutenant, forget it," he said. "Come on into the hall. I left a friend of mine in there, and I want you to meet him."

The president led the way into the banquet-hall of the Cosmos Club.

It was the "show room" of the club—its special pride, a room rich with decoration. The inlaid floor was half hidden by a great red carpet. There were lines of high-backed chairs upholstered in red velvet; a long mahogany table, heavily carved; walls of dark teak-wood, elaborately panelled. A musicians' gallery was set in one of the walls, behind three archways; and above the gallery ran a row of arched casements set with cathedral glass. A marble fireplace that was purely ornamental, stood behind the head of the table. It was flanked by tall pedestals of richly carved ebony, where stood great porcelain vases of quaint

Japanese workmanship. Above the mantel there hung a superb oil-painting.

The picture glowed with all the gorgeousness of the torrid zone. A brilliant effect of palms and ferns and sea and sky, it showed the shore of a tropical island where palm groves waved and ferns covered the ground, and the water, sheltered by a coral reef, lay without a ripple.

It was a sumptuous picture, and it harmonized with its setting, for all the interior of that clubhouse told of affluence. And all of that affluence came from sugar. Every bit of it represented the saccharine sap of the island, squeezed out and transmuted into dollars.

The room, just then, was lit only by a single row of shaded incandescents, which glowed above the oil-painting. Before the picture, and almost lost in the luxurious depths of a great velvet chair, professor Burl sat, note-book in hand.

He caught sight of Sherrill on the instant, and sprang to his feet, with a ready greeting.

"So you two gentlemen have met before," said the president.

"We certainly have, and on more than one occasion," answered Burl.

"I was showing professor Burl over our clubhouse, this evening," the president explained, "and he was so interested in this painting that he asked permission to remain here for a while to make a study of it; permission which I was very glad to grant."

"I have been trying to write a metrical description of the scene in the picture," said Burl. "I

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don't know how well I have succeeded. If you gentlemen will permit me to read you the lines, I should be very glad to get your criticisms."

The president hesitated. He liked poetry, but he doubted Burl's ability to produce it. Perhaps the lines would be more ridiculous than sublime. Then he reflected that they promised a diversion and a change of subject. He and Sherrill settled themselves and prepared to listen. Burl ran over his notes; then read as follows:—

"The foreground showed the blue sea and the land.
A seashore where no waves beat on the strand;
Hedged by the reef, the water lay like glass,
To which there crept deep ferns, a tangled mass
Of green, while rose a group of cocoa-palms,
Lifting against the sky their clustering fronds.
Half clouded and half clear, the sky showed bright;
Its clouds were glowing with the sunrise light,
And one could sense the fragrant morning air.
The sun still hung behind far peaks; some bare
And rough, upreared their dark volcanic rocks.
High up they rose, stupendous jagged blocks.
Elsewhere the slopes were clothed in emerald green.
Below them stood a town, where might be seen
White walls and spires, just peeping into view
Between the tangled tropic trees that grew
And waved above the margin of a bay,
Across whose smooth expanse there stole white sails."

"Well, Mr. Sherrill, what do you think of my lines?" he asked. At the same time, he handed Sherrill the notes.

Sherrill puzzled over the paper, tapping it while he thought. "You seem to have noted all the features in the picture, professor," he answered. "You have them all here, and yet there seems to be something missing. Isn't your description lacking in warmth? You have failed to sum up the impression made by the lustrous blue of the

water, the emerald green of the trees, and the freshness of the morning sky, toward which those rough volcanic heights thrust themselves."

"I am afraid that that impression would be one pretty difficult to convey perfectly," said the professor. And Sherrill agreed with him.

The president was fussing with a note-book which he had drawn from an inner pocket. Now he found his place.

"Here is a little verse which is a favorite of mine," he announced, and he read:—

 "Under heavy eyelids lie
 Glowing breadths of tropic sky;
 A cloud-like incense in the west;
 An isle upon the ocean's breast;
 Long-crested waves that haste to reach
 And perish on a snow-white beach;
 A shining shallop, trim and frail,
 Borne down upon the spicy gale;
 Two lovers on the ocean vast—
 Two lovers loving well at last
 Within the shadow of the sail."

"Now there's a verse which, to my mind breathes the very spirit of the tropics."

"Who was the author?" asked Burl.

"Charles Warren Stoddard."

All three men rose. They descended the marble staircase together. Burl and the president entered the limousine, for the president would leave the professor at his hotel.

For a minute Sherill remained standing before the Cosmos Club, his tall figure framed in the granite portal. He watched the gray car roll away and its red light wink out around a corner. He thought of the president's complete self-sufficiency.

"He thinks himself quite a logician," Sherrill reflected. "But one of these days someone will meet him with a stronger argument than any he can produce. Then he'll find it doesn't pay to drive men too far. At present he's living in a fool's paradise; that's it, a fool's paradise."

IX

TO THE HILLS

WHEN Crane left the hotel next morning, he decided to start at once for Beretania street, which Sherrill had informed him was the home of Japanese employment agencies.

For Honolulu weather, the day was disagreeable. The trade-wind was no longer a delightful spicy breeze, just strong enough to keep the air in circulation. There are times when it rises to a gale, and this was one of those times. High up in the hills the wind was roaring like a hurricane over the crest of the range. Especially was it pouring through the great V of the Pali. Up there a car could hardly have been driven against it. It came flying down the valley, to thrash the palms and rattle the awnings and set dust streaming in the streets of the city. The wind seemed to have snatched all the clouds from the hills, to scatter them broadcast over the heavens. A diffused grayness filled the sky. It was no longer a deep azure dome, contrasting sharply with great white cloud-billows. But to Crane the weather seemed nothing abnormal, for he compared it with the bluster of a summer afternoon in San Francisco. It reminded him of home.

In imagination he could see the pedestrians coming down Market street in San Francisco, with heads bowed, gripping their hats, their clothing

flapping and billowing about them, while cyclonic eddies in the afternoon breeze lifted whirling columns of sand and rubbish and newspapers to the sky. He could hear the howl of the wind as it came around the corner of the Call Building, while canvas signs flapped and tugged and struggled to break loose from their anchorings. In fact, as Crane clutched his hat, he almost felt homesick.

But he realized that the weather was unpropitious for hill climbing. "I'd have my head blown off, if I were on top of one of the peaks on such a day as this," he thought. He decided to spend his time in making all necessary arrangements. Then, if the next morning were propitious, an early start could be made.

He turned into Fort St., where he walked slowly, for it fascinated him to study the cosmopolitan population. The crowd represented the nationalities of more than half the earth.

Native Hawaiians, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Portuguese, Russians, Americans, English, Germans; there was even an occasional turbaned Hindoo. Each race was marked by its manner. Crane saw crafty Chinese, slinking along in their noiseless slippers; cheeky little Japs, fresh from the cane fields; death-like Koreans, with their pale yellow faces; great, beefy, brawny Hawaiians, marching slowly and stolidly; swarthy Portuguese, with gold rings in their ears; heavily bearded Russians. Each had its own racial tone.

A group of flower-sellers, with their gorgeous wares, made a brilliant dash of color. They seemed

to be the center of attraction for tourists. As Crane stopped to study them, he caught sight of a store which abruptly recalled Sherrill's recommendation that he provide himself with suitable protection against the deluge of rain which possibly he might meet on the hills.

The place seemed one where everything and anything wearable was retailed. Crane entered, and had no trouble in providing himself with rubber coat, hat and boots. Ordering them sent to his hotel, he continued up the street.

He was in the very center of Honolulu's commercial district. As he went, he glanced up at the street signs, wondering whether he had taken the right direction.

"It was stupid of me," he thought, "to leave the hotel without my map. But here's an officer. I'll ask him for Beretania St."

The patrolman whom Crane saw was a full-blooded Hawaiian. He was about six feet high, well and strongly built, except that he was carrying fifty pounds of surplus weight. He was dressed in a dark blue tunic, white trousers, and white helmet. On the whole the man had a neat and officer-like air.

"Of course, he speaks English," Crane thought. "That's the official lingo." He approached the officer.

"Is this the right direction for Beretania?" asked Crane, pointing up Fort St.

"Ugh?"

"Is Beretania St. that way?"

"Ugh? Me no sabbee."

Crane tried again very slowly.

"I want Beretania St."

There was a hopeless look of vacuity in the man's eyes, as he shook his head. Meanwhile, a group of newsboys had gathered.

"Sure, mister," one of them volunteered. "Beretania street one block. That fellow no understand. Want to buy Advertiser?"

Crane bought a paper, wondering how that patrolman came to be retained on the force.

"Next time I want information, I'll ask a newsboy," he thought.

The next crossing was Beretania. Turning to the left, he was in the city's Oriental quarter.

A sign in English above a door—"Japanese Employment Agency," caught his eye. The place occupied a small frame building. Crane studied it with the same curiosity with which he had watched the crowd.

Huge Japanese characters in a vertical row, filled a larger sign by the side of the door. Inside, the furniture consisted of a counter and two wooden benches. The floor was covered with matting. Portraits of Japanese military commanders were tacked to the walls. Above a window two sun-flags drooped, each with its white field and blood-red sun. Three or four Japanese obviously of the laboring class, were sitting on the benches. Plain as the room was, there was a subtle fascination in it which gripped the Californian. The spirit of the Orient seemed to pervade the place.

The proprietor stood behind the counter. Smiling

broadly and bowing low, he welcomed Crane. His English vocabulary was not a large one, but was more satisfactory than that of the policeman. It was sufficient for business purposes.

Crane explained his wants; four men with hatchets to chop trail; two men with a "mountain chair," and he produced a diagram of the chair, which he had drawn painstakingly to scale, showing the bamboo poles, connected by a cord, and in the loop of the cord a swinging seat with a foot-rest. But it transpired that the chair was a Japanese invention. One glance at the drawing was enough to enlighten the proprietor. "Yes, he could furnish such a chair. He knew just where it could be had." But he balked at the idea of the men being armed with hatchets. He suggested cane-knives, and a cane-knife was produced for Crane's inspection.

It was not so ferocious as Mrs. Burl had stated, "nearly as long as her arm, and as broad as her hand," but it looked sufficiently formidable. Imagine a gigantic butcher-knife, with a blade eighteen inches long, three inches wide, and very heavy. With such a weapon, a Japanese can lop off at a single blow a cane three or four inches in diameter. Crane decided that cane-knives would do.

Now they came to a discussion of terms. Crane would have to buy the chair outright, regardless of the fact that he only wanted it for a day. However, its cost was trifling. And the men would be furnished at two dollars per man.

"No, sir." Crane knew better than that. One

dollar a day was what men get for road-building, and that was all he would pay.

The proprietor explained, "Man make road, man work many day, one dollar all right. This job, man work one day, man work very hard, climb hill, carry chair, hill very high. Want two dollar."

There seemed to be some justice in the argument. A compromise was effected on a one-dollar-and-a-half basis. The men and the chair would be at the agency at six o'clock that evening for inspection. And they would be there at six o'clock the following morning, all ready for a start up the trail.

Crane was leaving the office, when he met John Carding, who greeted him with well simulated surprise.

"Why, good morning, Mr. Crane. Are you making a study of the Japanese population of Honolulu?"

"Only incidentally. I have been engaging some men as trail-cutters. I mean to do a little hill-climbing."

"Hill-climbing! In such weather as this! The wind will pick you up and blow you into the Pacific Ocean!"

"Oh, not to-day. But to-morrow I shall try it."

Carding still looked his disapproval.

"Which hill are you thinking of climbing?" he asked.

Crane pointed out the peak.

"Oh, Lanihuli," said Carding, "I climbed it once. There were a dozen of us in the party. Before we got there, the rain was coming down

like a cloud-burst. We were all of us soaked to the skin."

"I mean to get up there during the morning, before any showers set in."

"Get up there in the morning!! Why, the trail is so overgrown with brush, it will take you all day to fight your way to the top."

"Oh, I guess not. I am taking four men to clear the way; men who can chop brush as fast as they can walk."

"A pack of lazy Japs! I have a mental photograph of them chopping brush as fast as they can walk! Look out they don't get you up there, and then hold you up with those big knives of theirs. You may never get back to tell about it."

"You are a most encouraging person."

"Well, wait and see."

Crane excused himself and hurried away.

"Confound the fellow, how he grates on my nerves," he thought. "I'll dodge him next time I see him."

Next morning the gale had blown itself out, and had left the sky deliciously fresh and clear. At six o'clock Crane was at the agency. So were the Japanese. Crane took a glance at his map, marshalled his men, and led them to the foot of the hills.

As he went he wondered whether he shouldn't be able to end, or nearly end, his search for a "suitable spot" that very day. He was beginning to be impatient at delay. Yet he knew the need for caution. He was acutely alive to the fact that the least slip might lead him into some

awkward situation. A vague feeling that he was being spied upon had followed him continually. He thought of the previous morning. How had Carding happened to find him? Wherever he went, he seemed to meet that ubiquitous young man.

Suppose he should see from the top of the hills precisely such a place as he had in mind, and should seek it out, only to find Carding there before him. For a moment the idea was almost unbearable. Then came the thought that, were Carding actually in the employ of the officers of the X Sugar Company, he might be included with his employers, as one of the prisoners. He might be held and argued with, along with the others.

Unquestionably that would be the solution of the problem. Crane lifted his head and looked hopefully toward the top of the hills. He now stood at the foot of the trail. He reflected that he already knew the island in broad outline. To-day, once he stood at the summit, he might be able to narrow his search down so as to confine it to an inspection of one or two very definite localities. He stopped for a minute, looking up in the direction which he must follow.

He saw a great triangular block of green earth, rising at a slow angle, and turning its broad, grassy slope toward the sea. To right and left it was cut off sharply by valleys. For perhaps two miles it stretched slowly upward and onward. Then it was joined by a narrow tree-covered ridge, which led perhaps four miles farther, to the top of the peak Crane meant to climb. To ascend the

first slope would be child's play. But to follow the trail along the ridge would be quite another matter, for there the tropical jungle flourished, a jungle where the ascent would be a continual fight with brush. But, with four men to clear the way, Crane felt himself master of the situation.

As he eyed the top of the distant peak, his soul expanded with an exultant thrill of freedom. In imagination he saw himself on the heights, overlooking the whole island. Thus far in his journeys, he had been compelled to spend most of his time crawling along the shore or across the plains. He had had a worm's eye view of everything. To-day he should have the viewpoint of an eagle.

The weather was so fine that he glanced half regretfully at the package of rubber clothing, which was carried by one of his men, and wondered whether he had been wise in bringing it.

"I'll probably have no use for those things," he thought. He was wearing a white duck suit and a straw hat.

The Japanese were in the working clothes which they were accustomed to wear in the cane-fields. Their shirts and trousers were of blue cotton. Their boots were heavy and high. They had no hats, but over the head of each was tied a red handkerchief.

Crane recollected what Sherrill had said as to the advisability of reserving his energy for the top of the peak. He motioned to the men that he wished to enter the chair, and they brought it forward. The four knife-men started slowly up the trail, in advance, clearing away an occasional

guava-bush as they went. The two carriers came close behind them. Crane balanced himself on the swinging seat, resting his hands on the poles.

The men kept up a continual gabbling. Crane listened curiously to the strange harsh language, every word clicked out by the tongue between the clenched teeth.

The trail ran close to the top of the valley-wall. As it crept higher and higher, the valley-floor opened out beneath them, so that they overlooked its checker-board of tiny fields. Smoke from the homes hung in gray patterns over the ground. The road to the Pali lay like a white ribbon in the center, running between delightful residences with graceful grounds where grew great shade-trees and rows of royal palms.

Seen from below, Crane and his party would have looked like no more than a line of tiny specks creeping upward along the edge of the valley-wall. But they were making good progress. An hour after beginning the ascent, they stood at the top of the grassy slope, more than a thousand feet above the valley-floor. And now the real work of the climb must commence.

Ten minutes were taken for rest. The men improved the occasion by opening the package of rubber clothing, and tying the different articles to the bamboo poles of Crane's chair. To an accompaniment of jabbering, they produced short lengths of cord, with which coat, hat and boots were tied to the poles. Crane watched these preparations with amusement mixed with satisfaction. He thought they looked business-like.

This would leave all four knife-men with both hands free for the fight with brush.

Once more the chair was lifted by its bearers. The trail-cutters plunged into the trail. Bushes and branches began to crash. Crane found himself being carried slowly through the jungle.

Hacking and slashing their way through the jungle, went the men. Streams of perspiration dripped down their faces, but they showed no signs of relaxing. They were far from answering to Carding's description, "a pack of lazy Japs." The chair-bearers followed closely. Crane almost felt ashamed of himself, as he rested in the swinging seat, comparatively cool and unwilted, waving a gaudy Japanese fan. He was the only idler.

Now the tropical growth became so dense that it was only here and there that Crane could catch a glimpse between the trees, of the valley below him. But he was conscious of a steady upward progress, and by nine o'clock the party was at the foot of a final ascent of two hundred or three hundred feet, which would take them to the top of the peak. Here the way was so steep that Crane must leave the chair and scramble up the trail with the rest.

Up—up—up, they climbed. And now the summit was less than a hundred yards away, while the trail had ceased to rise. It lay almost level, turning to skirt a massive rock which rose to bar the path. Treading a narrow ledge, Crane approached a grassy platform, a dozen feet in width, which lay at the very top. The end of the

trail was right before him. A few more steps, and he stood at the giddy end. From a height of more than half a mile he gazed out into space. The cliffs descended sheer below.

"Magnificent! Yes, that's what I call magnificent!" he ejaculated, as the view burst upon him.

What a panorama of peak and plain and precipice and bright blue sea was spread below. This was not like peering down into some great chasm or canyon, some mighty crack in the earth's crust, which narrows as it deepens. The view swept over a broad green plain below, and over a broad blue ocean beyond, out and away to where the far dim circles of sea and sky melted together.

And in all of that picture there was contrast and color. The sky with its white clouds, the sea with its coral reefs, the land with its groves and cultivation; all that he saw told of warmth and brightness and luxuriance.

Considered as a mountain, the elevation was not high. But the isolation of the place made it seem many times higher. It was as though they stood at the top of a mighty monument, rising twenty-eight hundred feet into the air. The peak was a great block of volcanic rock, buttressed by three narrow ridges. One of them was the ridge over which they had come. The other two descended to right and left, forming the crest of the range. On its windward side the mountain was a precipice, while it showed faces nearly as steep to the valleys lying on either hand.

The stout trunk of a koa tree grew on the edge of the precipice. Crane took his stand beneath

its boughs. He fairly exulted as he stood at that lonely point, to which so few tourists had ascended. How insignificant seemed the Pali, lying so far below! Here he could study the island as from an aeroplane, and yet have the solid earth beneath him and abundant leisure at his command.

The weather was very propitious. The wind was soft. The clouds were not heavy. They did not settle on the hills, but floated above. Great golden shafts of sunshine fell between them.

Crane had boasted that he would learn to "know the island as he knew the pockets in his own coat." Well, here was his opportunity. With his field-glass in one hand and his map in the other, he stood on the summit of the peak, exploring the plains and valleys below, and fixing each feature of the country in his memory.

And, all the while, he must keep in mind the end and object of his explorations. Hill-climbing with Crane was not a recreation; it was a business, although a very congenial one. While he scrutinized the island, he passed judgment on each locality with reference to its suitability to his special purpose. And as he considered each place, there was always an objection. He thought how much more complex the problem was than it would seem at first glance.

"If only this were a story," he thought, "how easily everything could be arranged, and what a lot of work I could save myself. There would be no need for hill-climbing. In a story, I should not have to leave the city of Honolulu to find a

place where those fellows might be held. In a story, I need not be troubled by curious neighbors, unless I wished it. In a story, I could arrange that city and country people alike would be totally devoid of all inquisitiveness.

"But, in real life, there is a difference. In real life, I must study the country until I find a place where there are no neighbors; where no one will concern himself about anything which happens; a place to which four prominent citizens can be taken, and where they can be held indefinitely, without anyone asking any embarrassing questions."

He turned his glass from point to point, and mentally reviewed the merits of different sections. In the northwest he saw the far plateau, bounded by the western range. He swung his gaze around to the southeast, where lay the W plantation.

"A sugar plantation never would do," he thought, "for there everyone makes it a point to know everyone else's business. The pineapple country would be just as bad. I might take them to Fishtail Point. It is sufficiently secluded. But I should have to construct a camp, and the whole east side of the island would be exercised to know what I was about. If I brought them up here, and built a camp, a party of high school boys, out for a 'hike,' would arrive."

So he reviewed the situation. The broad accessible areas, the coastal plain and plateau were dismissed. No chance to avoid publicity there. The hills were inaccessible, or at least inconvenient of access. But how about the valleys?

It was true that some of them were thickly settled. But others contained few inhabitants, or none. Crane directed his glasses down into the valleys north of Honolulu. It seemed as though some of them were very quiet. He remembered what he had been told of illicit distilleries, hidden in the depths of the hills.

"Where you can hide a distillery, you can hide almost anything," he thought, and he decided that his next task would be a critical investigation of certain valleys, which he identified and noted on his map.

So the morning passed. It was nearly noon now. Crane and his men had brought supplies of sandwiches in their pockets. These were brought out and eaten. After the lunch, they stretched themselves on the deep grass beneath the shade of the kukui tree which grew at one side of the summit. The sun soothed them into drowsiness. What mattered it if they indulged in forty winks before beginning the descent.

Meanwhile, the clouds were steadily thickening. Had Crane looked to windward, he would have seen a rain squall on the ocean. A drop, splashing on his face, aroused him.

He looked across the Pali and saw the peak on the opposite side, shrouded in a grey mist. To windward he saw the shore blotted out by rain. All that the lieutenant and Carding had said about tropical downpours, came back to him.

There was no time to be lost. He snatched out his knife and cut the cords which held the rubber clothing to the poles. In a twinkling coat, hat

and boots were on, and he was scrambling down the steep rocky trail which led to the ridge below,—the ridge over which they had come.

The men were still more eager. While Crane had some protection against the weather, they had none. They were the more anxious to escape the storm, because their experience with tropical showers had been limited. Their work had been in the cane-fields, where the rainfall is comparatively light, so light that irrigation is necessary. They rushed toward the lower levels.

Just as they gained the ridge, they looked back to see a gray swirl of vapor swing over the peak they had left. The summit was blotted out in an instant. And then the deluge came roaring down.

A frightened howl rose from the Japanese. All broke into a run. Crane and his men dashed down the trail together.

The abruptness of the change was almost paralyzing. Five minutes before they had had the blue tropical sky above them, while before them the tropical sunlight glowed on valleys and hills and distant harbor and wide-spreading sweep of ocean. Then, at a single surge, a veil was drawn around them. The blinding shower wrapped the whole party in its gray embrace. They could not see a hundred feet away.

The wind was not high, but the rain was terrific. Crane knew that, on the plateau, rain sometimes fell at the rate of an inch an hour. Here it was raining at the rate of two inches an hour. Running was of no use. In an instant all of the Japs were soaked to the skin, while Crane, who had thought

himself secure in his rubber costume, began to feel little chilly trickles creeping down inside his coat. Along the trail the trees streamed cataracts. Liquid diamonds dashed from every leaf. Every little depression in the ground stood as full of water as it could hold. Crane sheltered his note-book in an inside pocket, but his map was being reduced to pulp.

In such fashion, groping beneath the streaming trees and floundering down a trail in which a brook was running, they plodded toward the plain. There was no cessation of the downpour, only a gradual diminution. The rain still was falling heavily when they reached the streets of Honolulu.

And there was John Carding, comfortably dry beneath an expansive umbrella. An expansive grin overspread his narrow face, as he inquired,—“Well, Mr. Crane, did you finish your hill-climbing before the rain began?”

Crane passed him without speaking.

“A few more days,” he thought, “and then——”

X

THE BUNGALOW

CHANGE renews the elasticity of the mind and sharpens the edge of the will. As Crane sat at the breakfast-table the following morning, tuned up by his varied experiences of the last few days, with their continual whirl of change of scene and change of plan, he felt equal to any enterprise. His mind was actively at work planning a program for the day.

To find a secluded spot, where a camp might be constructed,—that was his problem.

Or—better still—perhaps he could find a secluded cottage, which might be rented. No promising possibility should be overlooked.

“To-day,” he thought, “instead of exulting on the crest of the hills, I’ll explore the depths of the valleys,” and when he left the hotel he turned toward a car-line which would take him to the vicinity he had marked on his map the day before.

The car could take him only to the end of the plain on which Honolulu stands. Residents of that city know that Honolulu stands on a strip of land six miles long, lying between the hills and the sea. On the south this plain is bounded by the great extinct crater of Diamond Head. There the plain is two miles wide. At its opposite end it has narrowed to one mile.

Of course, only a part of this area has been built upon. The bulk of the city, with all its crowded Oriental quarter, is near the harbor. A long avenue, fringed with homes stretches for four miles in the direction of Diamond Head. The same avenue extends northward from the harbor, for two miles, to a point just outside the city limits. The King street cars traverse this avenue.

Half an hour after leaving his hotel, Crane was at the northern end of the line.

The scene was very rural. A wagon-road, rambling between rice-fields, stretched before him. He intended to follow the road to the polo-ground, for polo is no longer popular in Honolulu, and Crane had marked the valley containing the polo-field as "very secluded."

It was a typical country road, ascending and descending gently. Crane met a pair of Chinese who were bringing a wagon-load of ducks to town. In a field he saw a group of Chinese water-buffaloes. Presently the road was winding along the bank of a stream.

The stream ran through a miniature canyon, perhaps a hundred feet deep and a hundred yards wide. The vertical walls of the canyon were built of distinct layers of a very soft yellowish rock, which Crane could break between his hands. The ground was covered with a jungle of palms and algeroba trees. Here and there a home stood beneath the branches.

Guided by his map, Crane followed the road until a track turned off toward the polo-field. But he hesitated before entering the valley. Why not

get a better notion of the ground over which he had come? He turned to the left, and climbed a low ridge.

It was a curious picture which he saw from the top of the ridge. At least it seemed curious to one unused to a volcanic country. He was standing on the dividing wall between two wide craters. Their walls were comparatively low, rising nowhere more than two or three hundred feet. Their rings enclosed wide areas.

A lake lay in the center of one of the rings. Crane knew it from his map as Salt Lake crater, so-called because the brine of the ocean had seeped into the central space. The other crater lay at a higher level, with all its area covered with fields of sugar-cane. In fact, there were cane-fields on the margin of the Salt Lake, rising from the water's edge to cover the low slopes of the crater wall. Every available foot of land had been utilized for sugar.

The sparkling lake, crisped by the morning air, the green fields contrasting with the dark layers of volcanic rock which rose rough and ragged, conspired to produce an effect which struck Crane as very novel.

From where he stood he could look down the canyon up which he had come. He saw that it lay squarely between the foot of the hills and the wall of one of the craters. He saw that the stream coming from the direction of the polo-ground, turned sharply at right angles into the canyon. The explanation burst upon him.

The craters had been formed late in the history of the island, by outbursts of volcanic mud, squeezed up through the reef. The mud, flung against the edge of the hills, had blocked the entrance to the valley, where a lake had been formed, which, seeking an outlet, eventually overflowed the barrier. Its outlet dug the canyon. He understood now why the canyon wall was of material so very different from the hard, heavy rock of which the hills were made. The canyon wall was nothing more than dried mud, hardened to a soft rock.

Crane descended to the road, and walked toward the polo-ground. His eye followed the slope of the crater-wall. He could see where the volcanic mud had flowed into the valley. An analogy would have been a porcelain dish, containing hardened sealing wax. No one, seeing such a combination, would need a scientific education to enable him to understand that the dish had been made first, and the sealing wax had been poured into it, where it had hardened. It was just as clear that the volcanic mud had rolled into the lower end of the valley.

The polo-ground lay where the bed of the lake had been. Smooth as a floor it lay, covered with close turf. On either side rose the valley walls,—great, heavy layers of volcanic rock, where wave after wave of white-hot lava had rolled down from the crest of the hills, to cool and harden into stone.

All of which was interesting enough in its way. Exploration fascinated Crane. Was he in danger

of being side-tracked? of becoming "more interested in making a study of local conditions than in bearding the lion?" He had not set out to look for lava-flows.

However, he set his face resolutely up the valley, following a well marked trail.

But as he went he saw a cocoa-palm which grew in so curious a fashion that it tempted him to linger.

It is unusual to find a cocoanut-palm far from the shore, but here was one, growing in the valley. At some time, not very recent, it had been blown down. Its roots had retained a grip on the earth, and the tree had commenced a fresh growth. Now, half its length lay prone on the ground, while the newer half rose at right angles beneath the cluster of fronds. The tree made a fantastic object. Crane studied it for a minute. Beyond the tree he saw the valley wall, rising almost as steeply as a cliff. As his eye followed the ascent, Crane caught at the very top the glint of the white wall of a bungalow.

"An odd place to build," he thought. "I wonder how they reach it. Not from here, that's certain."

And after he had returned to the highway, and had retraced the road through the canyon, and had come out into the open plain, he looked up the hill, trying to catch another glimpse of the cottage.

He saw it now,—a tiny white spot on the crest of a ridge which rose above the lower slopes. The hill below it was a great triangular block of earth, rising slowly from the plain, and bordered by

deep ravines. The entrance to one of the ravines faced Crane.

"I imagine the trail runs up here," he thought.

The more he studied the bungalow, the greater grew his curiosity regarding it.

"It's not very far—a couple of miles, I guess," and he entered the ravine.

The place was rough, dry and rocky. Evidently, in that district, the higher hills absorbed the bulk of the rainfall. Down here the vegetation was very scanty. Beneath a stingy growth of cactus and lantana the slope showed as piled-up layers of volcanic rock. The path was only a rude cattle-trail, but it led steadily upward. Soon it turned and climbed the side of the gorge, leading to the face of the open slope. Here the ground was covered with deep, rich grass, where cattle grazed. An hour after Crane had left the plain, he stood at the apex of the slope, and more than a thousand feet above the level of the sea.

A narrow ridge stretched before him, with a trail following the crest of the ridge. The foreground of the picture was filled with trees, clothing the narrow ridge. Perched on a prominent point half a mile away, stood the bungalow. Far beyond it rose the main crest of the hills—a group of five triangular peaks, rising like five shark-teeth.

Crane had no doubt that this trail led to the very summit. He knew that the hills contained many old trails, made by the primitive Hawaiians, and abandoned long ago. But this trail was compara-

tively clear. There was no need of a squad of Japs to clear the way. Crane swung over the ground. Within ten minutes he stood before the cottage.

There was no sign of life, or of recent occupancy. No smoke curled from the chimney. Crane walked curiously around the place. It seemed as though no one had visited it in years. The figure of an eagle, carved from wood and gilded, rested on the front verandah. It looked as though it had been intended for an ornament, to be placed on the gable. But the plan never had been carried out. The gilding was peeling from the wood.

Crane ascended the verandah. He noted a red lantern, a great ship's side-light, which was fastened above the door. Looking in at a window, he saw that the kitchen was fitted up like a ship's galley, or kitchen. He saw a marine stove, with racks overhead for plates, and other racks from which the cups and glasses dangled. Instead of flights of stairs of the ordinary sort, there were accomodation-ladders, such as may be seen on board a sailing-vessel. Even Crane, unused as he was to the ways of ships and the sea, began to perceive that the place had been built by a nautical man.

He drew a supply of sandwiches from his pocket, and prepared to enjoy his lunch beneath the shade of the verandah. While he ate, the decision crystallized in his mind, that he had found the very place for which he had been hunting.

First, it was evident that the cottage had been

abandoned long since. No danger of an owner materializing at an awkward moment. Crane reasoned out how the place came to be there. It must have been that some nautical man, some ancient mariner, had climbed the hill and had become fascinated by the outlooks which it afforded. Whichever way one looked, the view was delightful, whether over the plain below, or up to the crest of the hills behind, or down into the ravines on either side. Crane glanced down into the valley from which he had first caught sight of the place. He gazed over the deep green of the grove which grew below. The trees clung to the steep rocks, twining their twigs and tendrils into the densest tangle.

And the ravine on the opposite side of the place was just the same,—filled with all the luxuriant verdure of a tropical valley. What a contrast between its appearance at that height, and the one it had shown lower down, where Crane had entered it, where gaunt ribs of rock protruded through the scanty vegetation.

Yes, some ancient mariner had had this bungalow constructed so that he might be able to come there and enjoy the scenery to his heart's content, when he was so minded. Crane thought of the enthusiasm which it showed, for everything that went into the construction of that building, every stick of wood, and every bit of furniture, must have been carried there, on men's backs, two-and-a-half miles up a rough cattle trail. And the trail was very steep in places.

"Carding, old man," he thought, "there are others

beside myself and Burl, who are crazy about the island scenery."

Why, this place would be a hundred times better for his purpose than a cottage in some valley, such as he had dreamed of renting. No landlord to come spying around here! Nor was this the sort of place to which idlers would be attracted. No one was likely to come, scrambling two-and-a-half miles up a rough cattle-trail, very steep in places, unless he had very urgent business. Here, by the aid of the band of Japanese who were awaiting him, Crane could bring his four "male-factors of great wealth." Here he could argue with them at his leisure. Here he could try unlimited moral suasion, and even a little physical suasion, should the event require it.

The more Crane studied the situation, the more enthusiastic he felt. His lunch disposed of, he jumped to his feet to reconnoiter the premises once again.

The locks on the doors were obviously of the most simple construction. There would be no difficulty in getting a bunch of old keys which would open them. And there was plenty of room behind the house to furnish the Japanese with space for a camp. The more Crane studied the place, the better it pleased him. While the little bungalow was very plain, it had been built in a very solid and business-like fashion. It evidently was well furnished in all its four rooms. It was well supplied with water, which came from the roof, off which the rain ran into two wooden tanks.

"One such shower as I saw yesterday," thought Crane, "would fill both those tanks."

But there was no immediate need for the shower. Both tanks were full. Crane tasted the pure rain water, mentally comparing it with city water.

"I'll have to tighten the pincers on those fellows, when I get them up here," he thought, "or they'll get nothing worse than a pleasant vacation."

He spent a little time in exploring the trail to the higher hills, but found that beyond the house, it was desperately overgrown. He returned to the verandah, where he could drink in the view—Pearl Harbor and the western hills, glowing in the golden Hawaiian sunlight. Then he thought of the man who had built the cottage. He could imagine the seafarer, back from far voyagings, climbing the trail to spend a few weeks in this island bungalow. In imagination he could see the old fellow, sitting on the verandah and smoking the pipe of peace, while gazing out at the very view which he himself was beholding.

And it was a fascinating view. Far in the west the declining sun gilded the edges of the great masses of cloud which hovered above the western range, fifteen and twenty miles away. The flat, table-like top of the loftiest summit was covered with a white table-cloth of clouds. Below it the broad sweep of an ancient lava-flow sloped to the plain. Crane thought of the days when the white-hot lava had streamed down. In imagination he could see it pour, hissing and roaring, into the water, until the ocean boiled and bellowed, while clouds of steam rose to the sky.

His gaze fell lower still, and rested on a more peaceful scene, on the broad expanse of Pearl Harbor. A dozen miles away, it was spread out like a map before him, lying in the very center of the plain, gleaming like silver in the afternoon light. The rays of the sun were reflected from the water, until it resembled a great, burnished mirror. Every island and inlet stood out, black and distinct, against the shining surface. There the great harbor lay, mapped out before him, divided by its peninsulas, and dotted with its islands.

His gaze fell lower still, on the shining green of cane-fields, and on the great circles of the craters just beyond the foot of the hill. At the very base of the hill lay the canyon through which he had come that morning. From this height it showed, sharply defined, like a long railway cutting.

"Whoever planned this bungalow, knew what he was about," thought Crane. "What a glorious place for a vacation. And how different from a typical Hawaiian home," and he turned his glasses down to the margin of Pearl Harbor, where he could see Hawaiian homes standing in the midst of their overflowed rice-fields.

His eye swept the far ocean's distant rim; then over the groves of palm trees growing on the shore; over the plain with its wealth of sugar and tropical products, and up to the steep volcanic heights where hung the trade-wind clouds. He quoted:

"Every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile."

He glanced once again at the bungalow. Then he started down the trail.

"We are ready for the play to begin," he thought. "It will have the blue Pacific ocean for a background, the whole island for a stage. And in the cast there will be four assorted villains,—the manager and officers of the X Sugar Company."

XI

CHARLEY DEANE

CRANE hurried back to his hotel, where he dined alone, and reflected, while he sat at the table, on the next move he should make.

There were two things must be done at once. First, he must learn who was the owner of the bungalow. He must make sure that no one would be likely to question his temporary use of the place. Also, he must learn the date and place of the next monthly meeting of the officers of the X Sugar Company, for he planned to deal with them in a body, not one by one. Nor could he see any chance to get them together, without arousing suspicion, except by waiting until they held a meeting. Of course, the traditional detective of fiction would have been ready with a simple expedient—a plan to send a mysteriously worded note to each man, requesting him to be at the northern end of the King car-line at eight o'clock on the evening of that day. Equally as a matter of course, all would have come as requested, when they might have been induced to visit the bungalow. But the methods of fiction did not commend themselves to the Californian.

Next, he must get into touch with the Japanese. They were a "gang" who had been employed as cane-cutters on the X plantation. All cane-cutting

is paid for as piece-work. Through a clerical error, this particular gang had been defrauded of a day's pay. They had struck promptly, and had returned to Honolulu, where they had tried to get, by legal means, what they considered their rights. A representative of the minority stockholders had become interested in their case, and had arranged to pay their living-expenses. He had returned to California, but an agent paid the money once a month. It would be through him that Crane would approach the Japanese.

As Crane considered the case, a plan came to him like a flash. He would have them appear in person before the officers' meeting. They would come ostensibly to state their case. He himself would be waiting outside, with a limousine. The manager and officers would be "induced" to enter the car, when they might be whirled away to the vicinity of the polo-field, from which they could be carried to the bungalow.

As Crane rehearsed the plan in his mind, its simplicity and effectiveness struck him as something marvelous. It pleased him so well that he almost laughed aloud. And even a pessimist would admit that the plan possessed possibilities. But many things must be done before trying to carry it out.

One thing at a time. Next morning he visited the office of the Tax-Collector, where he inquired concerning the bungalow. An obliging clerk identified it on a map, and recollected its ownership at once.

"That place was built some years ago for an American sea-captain," he explained. "But it hasn't been occupied for three years," and he copied the name from the books. "He's the master of a big American ship, but if you want to find him, you'll have to look on the other side of the world; Australia, I believe."

That was all Crane needed to know, and he hurried to a telephone, where he called up lieutenant Sherrill.

"Can you find out for me when the officers of the X Company will hold their next meeting?" he asked.

"That sounds better," Sherrill thought. "He means to meet them. He'll try to come to an understanding." Then he answered,

"I'll see the treasurer to-day, and I shall find out the time and place from him. I'll call you up this evening, and let you know."

The treasurer to whom Sherrill referred, was announced on his visiting-cards as "Mr. Charles Wellington Deane;" but throughout the business and social circles of Honolulu he was known as "Charley" Deane.

Charley Deane was no new-comer to the Islands. He was a native of Honolulu, and so was his father before him, for his grandfather, the Rev. Abner Deane, had been one of the first missionaries sent out from New England.

The Rev. Abner had been a patient toiler in the Lord's vineyard, where he had found the grapes small and few. His son, Abner Deane, Jr., had

followed in the same path. But the grandson, Charles W., was made of other stuff. At twelve years of age he had computed that "it cost ten thousand dollars to Christianize each Kanaka, and not one of them was worth having after they got him." He decided on a business-career, and celebrated his twenty-first birthday by becoming a clerk in a bank.

For the next ten years he remained a clerk in the Merchants' and Planters' Bank of Honolulu. Meanwhile, it had been discovered that immense bodies of artesian water underlay the island. Sugar-cane was being planted and grown by irrigation where no one had been able to grow anything whatever. Charley Deane woke up to the fact that he had inherited from his father a thousand acres of apparently worthless land, which might be made very valuable. The Rev. Abner had bought it at a dollar an acre, from one of his parishioners, at a time when no one else would have given a cent an acre. His son had often regretted the fact that he had not inherited the thousand dollars instead of the land. Now he changed his mind. Those thousand acres, together with a tract controlled by the man who became president of the company, were the commencement of the X sugar plantation.

Ten years had elapsed since then. Thanks to the revenues of the plantation, Deane had become an officer of the bank, and a heavy stockholder.

The bank stood at the intersection of two of Honolulu's principal streets. Its walls were of

gray volcanic stone. Through wide plate-glass windows, only a few feet above the level of the pavement, passers-by might look into the outer offices, where a staff of book-keepers were posting great ledgers. Deane, as an officer of the bank, occupied an inner room.

He was in a specially amiable frame of mind that morning, when lieutenant Sherrill's name was brought in. "Yes, he would see Mr. Sherrill at once."

As Sherrill entered, he noted the sumptuous appointments of the office—the massive furnishings and tasteful pictures. Solid and dignified and radiating an air of wealth, the appointments were ideal. The place had a tropical tone, for the furniture was of native koa wood, splendidly polished. A great bouquet of hibiscus blossoms stood on the broad table. On the wall hung an oil-painting showing an ancient Hawaiian king in his long ceremonial robes—robes woven of scarlet feathers, a helmet of golden feathers covering his head. The owner of this beautiful room sat at the table.

"Another man who is accumulating a private fortune from the expense account of the X plantation," Sherrill thought.

He had a much lower opinion of Deane than of the president. Mentally, he compared Deane to a rat. And there was a good deal in the treasurer's appearance—his long sharp nose, his black beady eyes, and his black hair smoothly plastered down—which suggested the rodent. Sherrill reflected that a rat is a creature which will rather run

than fight. He decided to see if he couldn't "throw a scare" into Charley Deane.

But Deane knew nothing of Sherrill's attitude. He greeted the lieutenant with something which he intended for a hearty handclasp, though it seemed very limp to the officer, and invited him to a seat in a wide leather chair.

"Well, Mr. Sherrill, what can I do for you?" Deane inquired.

"Nothing for me. I am not here to ask favors for myself. I come as one of the minority stockholders in the X Sugar Company. It has come to my knowledge that you are likely to get into pretty serious trouble. I want to warn you, before it is too late."

"Indeed! What's the trouble?"

"Perhaps you don't know that the California stockholders—two hundred of them—have perfected an organization for the purpose of taking active steps to protect their interests!"

"Perhaps I do know it! And perhaps you don't know that I was one of the defendants in a case brought three months ago, by those very parties. It may interest you to know that the case ended in a sweeping verdict against them."

"Yes, you got the verdict, and you also came in for a nice bunch of criticism; what was it they said of you? that there was a good pickpocket lost when you went into the sugar business?"

"And we showed that there would be a good plantation lost if we changed our methods. Do you really want us to do as they demand? pay out every cent of the proceeds in dividends, as fast as

they come in? set aside nothing for upkeep? spend nothing for expansion?"

The lieutenant laughed, not very pleasantly.

"It seems to me I've heard those arguments before. Upkeep and legitimate expansion are all very well. But five-thousand-dollar autos and fifty-thousand-dollar homes for the officers are quite another matter. I wonder what your father and grandfather would say to all that, were they alive to-day, to know of it?"

"Why don't you suggest that we dispose of our private property, convert it into cash, and turn all of our 'ill-gotten gains' over to the California stockholders?" Deane inquired. "No doubt they would be delighted to get the cash."

"Not a bit more pleased to get it than you were pleased to get their cash, when you were selling the stock, ten years ago. But you haven't answered my question."

"My father and grandfather have nothing to do with the case."

"That's your attitude. You realize that you are sprung from missionary stock. But you have forgotten the missionaries. They were your forebears, it is true, but to-day you think of nothing but the money-game you are playing. Money has become your god. The God of the missionaries means little or nothing to you."

Deane was sitting with one elbow on the arm of his rocker. Now he lifted the cigar from his lips and inclined his arm forward, twirling a long forefinger in Sherrill's direction as he answered,

"We seem to be drifting away from the subject, Mr. Sherrill. Suppose you come out frankly, and tell me what you want to advise."

"Well, it's like this, Mr. Deane. During the last six or seven years you and your associates have been making money. You may not have made as much as they claim, but you have established yourselves very well. You own handsome homes and clubs and cars and yachts. You have the prestige of success. You are enjoying all the social advantages which such success brings. Now, why not be satisfied with what you've got? Why not let someone else have a look-in?"

"It's true we've made a little money," Deane admitted, "though not nearly so much as they say. But we are in a position to do very much better, if we can continue our present policy a while longer."

"There you go!" the lieutenant exclaimed. "That's the trouble with you and your associates. The more you get, the more you want! Never satisfied."

"I guess it's human nature."

"A very disagreeable side of human nature. But let me repeat what I said before. Your present course, if persisted in, will bring you a lot of very unpleasant notoriety; so unpleasant that you will wish you had changed your policy in time. Just now, there is time. But that stage is passing. You can no longer shield yourselves behind the old arguments. I repeat, you are laying yourselves open more and more, every day, to unpleasant criticism and notoriety. Just let enough of that

sort of thing get started, and something worse will follow. The next case which comes up in court, will feel the effect of it."

Deane wriggled a little under this argument. Then he said,

"Why do you come to me alone about this? I am only one. Even if you did convince me, I might not be able to persuade my associates. Why don't you appear before us when we have our monthly meeting?"

"When do you have your next meeting?"

"To-morrow afternoon, at 2 p. m., at the home of our president."

Sherrill made a careful note of time and place on a page of his notebook, a page which he had headed "Kenneth Crane."

"We shall all be there," Deane continued; "president, secretary, treasurer and manager. We shall be pleased to give you a hearing. I know you won't show us any mercy, but we don't want our corporation to get a bad name," and Sherrill knew that his argument had produced an effect; just how great an effect, the outcome alone could determine. Then he inquired,

"But suppose that a representative of the California stockholders, a Mr. Crane, direct from the mainland, wished to appear before that meeting. Would he be given a hearing?"

"He certainly would, Mr. Sherrill."

"Very well," and the lieutenant rose.

As he stood there for a moment handling his military cap, his eye was caught by the portrait of the native ruler, hanging on the wall. The

pictured figure of the king was posed in an attitude of easy dignity, with one hand extended in a gesture which seemed to invite the world to his island kingdom.

Sherrill's eye fell from the painting to a roll-top desk, and on top of the desk he noticed a framed white card carrying a motto. It seemed like a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous, for the card read, "Don't waste your time trying to find out why a black hen lays a white egg. Get the egg." He reflected that, to Deane's mind, those words probably contained the ultimate essence of all human wisdom.

"Is that your mental attitude?" he asked, indicating the card.

"It is. Results are what interest me."

"You're not interested in means and methods."

"They're none of my concern."

"You don't believe it would be worth while to find out which variety of hen-food would induce the black hen to lay a maximum number of white eggs in a minimum number of days."

Deane did not care to admit that the very mention of means and methods jarred his nerves—that mentally he classed all such study as "bosh" and a waste of time. He contented himself with answering that he "always left that sort of thing to others."

"Then you're content to be a plodder in paths made by others."

"How so?"

"Well, to illustrate; long before the X plantation

was started you knew that the rainfall was very much heavier on the higher hills of the island, where it's not needed, than on the plains, where it is needed."

"Yes."

"And that the volcanic rocks are very porous, absorbing the water like a gigantic sponge."

"Yes."

"And that the presence of large bodies of artesian water beneath the plain had been proved,—immense reservoirs fed from the hills."

"That's so."

"Yet it never would have occurred to you to apply that knowledge and to use those stores of artesian water in irrigating cane-lands, had you not seen your neighbors doing so, and making money thereby."

This was true; and—had Sherrill only known it—at that very minute Deane owned stock in a tourist hotel, and had contributed to a fund for fetching an expert to Honolulu, an expert who would tell how the city might be beautified so as to render it more attractive in the eyes of travelers, with a consequent increase in tourist travel and greater profits in the hotel business. And all the while the solution of the problem was before Deane's eye, had he been willing to study on it.

He knew that lines of palm trees on a sandy shore are very picturesque. He knew that there was every opportunity to plant a row of gracefully curving cocoa-palms around Honolulu harbor, where they would have added a tropical tone to relieve the commercial foreground of wharves and

the commercial background of warehouses. He could have pointed out the very grove, lying between King street and the sea, from which the trees could have been transplanted—a grove which would have been improved by the thinning. And yet he preferred to contribute money for fetching an expert from the mainland—a man who had gotten his training in large American municipalities, and who suggested a plan for city improvement so expensive that it never could be carried out.

“Well,” Deane answered, “you’ll have to admit that in spite of my plodding methods and lack of imagination, I’m accumulating some metaphorical eggs that are pretty valuable. If you’ll go ten miles from here to Pearl City, you’ll find a very delightful home, which belongs to me. My property in the city is rented, all of it. And the X plantation is a wonderful producer.”

In fact, Charley Deane was nearly as well satisfied with his lot in life as was the president of the company. Every week-day morning a luxurious car brought him to the bank, where he would arrive about ten a. m. In the afternoon his car might carry him to the beach at Waikiki, or to the X plantation, or on a tour of inspection of his real-estate holdings in the city. On Sunday he would entertain guests in his Pearl City home, where he could amuse them with Sunday cruises around Pearl Harbor, for he owned a commodious motor-yacht. His name still was carried on the church-roll, but services seldom saw him.

After Sherrill had bowed himself out Deane continued to sit there, lost in thought, while the clock ticked on and his lunch-hour came and went. What the lieutenant had said, revolved in his mind. Why not be content with his present good fortune? Why tempt fate further?

"I think I'll have a talk with our president," was his conclusion. "I'd trust his sooner than anyone else, to steer us away from the rocks."

XII

MALEFACTORS

DEANE turned to the telephone and called up the Cosmos Club. Yes, the president was there. He was very busy, but if Mr. Deane could come at eight o'clock, he would be delighted to see him. And at eight o'clock that evening Deane's motor-car brought him to the portal of the Cosmos Club.

The president had been busy preparing a paper on "The Value of Literary Criticism." This paper he would read before a select circle of the club. Now he was sorting and numbering the pages.

He was sitting in an ebony chair at an ebony table, in a study adjoining the library. The room was panelled with koa wood, and lined with bookcases which rose to half the height of the walls, and upon the cases stood statuettes and specimens of Chinese pottery and porcelain. Their white curves and gaudy colors contrasted with the dark woodwork. A cluster of electric globes hung from the center of the ceiling, shaded so that the light, beneath the crimson silk, fell only on the round top of the table and the figures of those who sat beside it. The features of the two men who faced each other across the table stood out strongly against the dark background of books.

Charley Deane had been prompt in keeping the

appointment. Now he fussed and fidgetted, as he considered how best to broach the subject.

"Lieutenant Sherrill was in my office this morning," he said at last, "He came to speak to me about——"

"About dividends?"

"Yes. How did you know?"

"He was here to interview me on the same topic, two days ago."

"Then you know his opinion of our game of freeze-out."

"I believe I do. He seems to be getting quite active as a champion of the minority stockholders. I wonder what's behind his sudden activity."

"That is precisely the question that's troubling me. That's what I want to discuss with you. Sherrill thinks those California people are getting desperate."

"Well, I can tell you where he gets some of his ideas. A representative of the minority stockholders, is here from California. His name is Kenneth Crane. He and Sherrill have been touring the island together. I suppose Crane has given him his version of the affair."

"Well, what do you think they mean to do?" Deane asked anxiously.

"Do! They can't do anything," and the president's tone was very contemptuous.

"Perhaps they cannot, but even so, we shall come in for a lot of harsh criticism; they'll try to give us a reputation that may stick."

"Criticism! My dear Mr. Deane, do you allow such a little thing as criticism to worry you?"

"I'm afraid I do, especially when I fear that something worse will follow."

"Then just set your mind at ease. That 'something worse' is not coming. Nor is there anything in criticism, and I am prepared to prove it to you," and the president picked up a periodical which had been lying on the table. He scanned it for the citation he wanted.

"You've come to me in the nick of time, Charley," he continued. "The paper on which I've been working, deals with this very topic, and I'm full of it," and for the next half hour the president proceeded to give Deane the substance of the paper, discoursing upon the relative merits of two popular novels and upon the bad judgment displayed in certain reviews which he had culled from a literary journal. While Deane found the talk "interesting" in some respects, it struck him as being so far off the subject he had come to discuss, that he listened with less and less patience as the president proceeded. When the peroration was concluded, Deane's patience was gone.

"Yes, yes; I'll admit all you say," he exploded. "But, for Heaven's sake, what has all this to do with the question of DIVIDENDS? Here we sit, talking popular novels and literary criticism, while two hundred angry stockholders are getting ready to put us in jail."

The president studied Deane for a moment. "Poor Charley! I guess he has lost his nerve," he thought. Then he said,

"Why, Charley, the whole aim and object of my talk has been to prove that criticism is a worthless

thing that should be ignored. The drift of my argument may not have been quite clear at first, but I believed I had made it plain ultimately. Let those two hundred stockholders criticise us all they want. Their criticisms will run off like water from a duck's back."

But Deane was warmed up and argumentative. He answered,

"You say that all criticism is worthless, because you believe you have proved that a certain journal's reviews of Jack London's books are worthless. But even if the point is well taken, how about those journals that reversed the verdict? One false criticism doesn't disqualify all criticism. One swallow doesn't make a meal."

The president declined to argue the point.

"Yes, I suppose one of those little birds cannot have much meat on its bones," he admitted. "Well, we'll let that pass. But as for putting us in jail, the thing cannot be done."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Absolutely."

"I wish you would make me equally sure."

"I am absolutely sure, because we are in a position to put our opponents in jail before they can touch us. Just consider the case for a moment, Charley. First, what do we know for certain? We know that those minority stockholders are disgruntled and would like to make trouble for us. We know that they have tried to take legal steps and have failed. We know that they are paying the expenses of a party of Japanese who were working for us, under contract. Mark that, "under

contract." Now those Japanese are just as much under contract to us as ever they were. Their time hasn't expired. We didn't hold them, simply because we had found them to be 'undesirable citizens,' so to speak. Now, if Mr. Crane or anyone else approaches them with an offer of employment, we can shut right down on Mr. Crane or anyone else. We can put him in jail for six months for enticing them to break their contract with us, for that is what his offer of employment can be shown to amount to. Now do you begin to appreciate the legal side of the situation?"

Deane did begin to grasp the legal side of the situation. He also regretted that the president had not confined himself to the legal aspect of the case, instead of having wasted half an hour in discussing the value of criticism.

"Then the situation is this," he said. "If Mr. Crane assigns these Japanese any definite task, that will amount to giving them employment, and that will render him liable to imprisonment under the law."

"Precisely. Just recollect the law. And while Mr. Crane is serving his sentence, he will not be in a position to trouble us."

"That is, if we are in a position to get him in time."

"And we will get him in time. Our legal friend, Atten, has a man employed to watch the Japanese. The moment Crane approaches them, Atten will know it and the legal machinery will work."

"Good! Then Atten is all ready for the emergency."

"He is. You may rest secure, while leaving all such points to Frank Atten. I have every confidence in the sagacious man who to-day, as the attorney of our corporation, walks, with recollected feet the path of legal equity. And if you have any doubts, just present them to him to-morrow. You know we have our regular monthly meeting in my Manoa valley home."

"All right. I'll be there. But tell me one thing before I go,—what are 'recollected feet'?"

The president's urbanity was not proof against this fling. He hesitated and then answered,

"Well, according to the New York Sun, they are—Homer's and those that tread on you."

And Deane and the president rose and walked together to the street, where each entered his car. They would meet again "to-morrow in Manoa valley." But meanwhile there were others—uninvited guests, citizens of Japan—who were also planning to attend the meeting.

XIII

CITIZENS OF JAPAN

HE WAS driving down the road to Manoa. Down a long avenue that lay like a tunnel beneath the algeroba trees Charley Deane was coming in his roadster. The deep maroon body of the car, varnished, to mirror-like perfection, glowed like a great jewel, under the subdued light. Then it swung around a corner where commenced the long stone wall bounding a college campus, and Deane drove toward the hills, with the entrance to the valley opening broadly before him.

If Deane hadn't been used to the place already, he would have thought it worth a visit for its own sake, for in all Honolulu there was no more delightful district. Manoa was a paradise of winding roads and golf-grounds and suburban bungalows; a place where palm branches waved and dragon trees rustled and multitudinous flowers flashed all the tints of the rainbow while diffusing their perfume over wide lawns. Scarcely known to traveling public, the sequestered nook where the valley lay dreaming among the hills was away from the beaten tracks. No dusty highways, scorched by throngs of island-circling tourists, ran through its peaceful domain. An occasional visitor might happen to find the little electric line leading within its borders. If so, as he walked the quiet paths, he decided that here at last was the Happy Valley.



At the very entrance there were some low rocky elevations, the remains of streams of lava and cinders which had burst out during a comparatively recent period in the island's history. The low heights had been utilized as sites for suburban homes. Among them was the home of the president of the X Sugar Company.

On a stony platform which jutted out from the valley wall the mansion had been set. The site was a natural terrace, overlooking the valley-floor two hundred feet below, where a curving white road swung toward the higher hills—hills covered with a tangled exuberance of tropical forests, through which the eye could follow the channels of immense ravines that climbed to the crest of the range. Blue skies, brave with sunlight, arched overhead, and through those skies there drifted the trade-wind clouds with their perpetual play of mist and light and shadow. Nowhere could the president have found a more delightful location. And his home was worthy of such a setting.

But the residence was not of a palatial type. It was no turreted chateau, with yard-thick walls of black volcanic rock, and great arched entrances, and narrow windows and wide halls, with towers and pinnacles lifting their round roofs above it. Its keynote was comfort, not cost—a frame structure, with moss-green roof and low white walls and white pillars and wide verandahs; a charmingly modern bungalow. For a home in the tropics it was idyllic. And it was surrounded with grounds which blazed with all the splendor of the torrid zone.

The grounds were sheltered from the highway by a triple line of cocoa-palms, and by a low wall of coral rock just outside the trees, with an elaborate wrought-iron gate opening into a winding avenue that led to the house.

Used as he was to the place, Charley Deane couldn't help stopping for a moment to admire the beauty of the garden.

"What a splendid ornamental tree is the royal palm!" he thought.

The tree he looked at, like a lustrous plume, played in the wind. Its fronds were emerald green, crowning the column of the tall straight trunk, which rose as smooth and round as though it were a pillar, carved in a rock-hewn temple of old Egypt. And there were others like it,—five hundred more. Ranged in two ranks, on either side they stood, bordering the winding avenue which led to the mansion.

Lines of magnolias paralleled the palms. From each immense blossom of creamy white there floated a delicate perfume.

Beneath the trees there grew poinsettias. They flamed with scarlet flowers.

So that garden grew, terrace above terrace, all overlooked by the mansion. Within the grounds had been gathered nearly all the more delightful flowers and trees of the torrid and temperate zones; green, spreading samang trees from India, golden broom trees from Europe, rose-tinted orchids from Brazil. It was difficult to decide which to admire most—the taste of the arrangement or the beauty of the colors or the delicacy

of the perfume,—for the air was the humid, hot-house air of the tropics, in which the heavy fragrance hung till it almost cloyed.

When the afternoon breeze filtered into those grounds, it was accompanied with the rustling of the long, saber-like leaves of dragon trees, with the rippling of palm-branches, and with the slow waving of trailing tropical vines overhanging blossoming rows of hibiscus.

Scarlet and green and gold! Grace and color and perfume! All were there.

Through the garden Charley Deane hurried. He ascended a short wide flight of steps which led to a verandah. The verandah was very wide, with a white roof and a low white railing, and just outside that railing there grew a row of royal palms, rustling their great green fronds against the white pillars. Where fell the shadow of one of the palms a table stood, and around that table were gathered Deane's associates.

There was the president, carefully groomed from top to toe, his blue serge suit fitting him perfectly, the coat thrown wide open to display an expanse of negligee shirt. His silver whiskers contrasted with his gold-rimmed eye-glasses.

There was the secretary, Frank Atten, with his winsome smile and his ponderous bulk, a broad-brimmed Panama shading his smooth-shaven face.

There was the manager—tall, lean, dark-complexioned, with hard glittering eyes and a nose which suggested a vulture's beak. Fresh from the cane-fields, he had ridden on horse-back to the meeting.

"There! This is good!" said the treasurer, as he took his place. "Give me the open, every time, for private conference. They say that walls have ears, but where there are no walls, there's no danger of dictagraphs or listeners at keyholes," and he looked uneasily over the railing to make sure that no one lurked beneath the edge of the verandah. His associates smiled. No sense of impending peril troubled them.

"Poor Charley! Timid as ever," the president whispered beneath his hand. "I should not mind if the whole town were here to hear us," and he rapped for order.

"Mr. Deane," he informed the treasurer, "we have listened already to the secretary's report. If there is no objection, it stands approved. And now we come to the special business of the day,—whether our present policy shall continue, or whether we shall reverse it and declare a dividend. We shall be pleased to hear from you, Mr. Deane."

"Really—really, gentlemen," and the treasurer flushed and stammered, "Please don't classify me as a champion of the minority stockholders. I was under the impression that lieutenant Sherrill, and also a Mr. Crane, from the mainland, would be here to address the meeting in their behalf."

"We have seen nothing of them."

"Then I find myself in a most embarrassing situation. I sincerely trust that no offense shall be taken at anything I shall say."

There were polite murmurs of "None whatever, Mr. Deane," "Please proceed."

"Gentlemen, I have been reflecting very seriously over the situation. We commenced our present policy in the belief that the minority stockholders would sell their holdings when they saw that those holdings brought them no returns. But what is the situation to-day? We have two hundred angry stockholders camping on our trail,—aroused, angry and determined. They propose to annoy us continually, to be a thorn in the side of each of us. They propose to mold public opinion, to make us objects of public contempt. And, besides all that, there is no knowing in what devilish plots they may engage—plots affecting our liberty or our lives. Has not the time come for a change of policy? We have prospered wonderfully. Why not be content with our good fortune and avoid future trouble?"

Deane's re-assurance had evaporated in the tropical glare of the morning after.

There was a sarcastic smile on Frank Atten's face as he listened. Now he rose to reply.

"Before Mr. Deane lets a conspiracy worry him, wouldn't it be well for him to make sure that there is a conspiracy?"

"I refer to the squad of Japanese who are out on strike," Deane interrupted. "I understand that the Californians are in communication with them."

"What of it? I believe I have that situation thoroughly in hand. I thought you knew it."

"But it wouldn't take much to incite those Japs to anything."

"What could they do? You'll have to show me."

"Have you forgotten the death of Hooper, our book-keeper? Have you forgotten the morning when he was found, foully murdered, shot in the back, lying on the track of the plantation railroad?—Hooper, one of the best liked and most popular men in the Islands."

"But these Japanese had nothing to do with the death of Hooper—and you know we tried hard to saddle it on them."

Deane dropped back into his chair, silenced.

"And next," Atten continued, "if the idea of a conspiracy is troubling Mr. Deane, wouldn't it be well for him to look up the laws against conspiracy? He will find them very stringent. But, even if we sat idly and made no attempt to defend ourselves, I doubt if the people to whom he refers could accomplish anything. The Californians are far away. You say they may influence public opinion. How can they influence public opinion in the Hawaiian Islands? And, even if they could, to what does public opinion amount?"

"I believe that what's worrying Mr. Deane, is the presence in Honolulu of a representative of the California stockholders. Don't let your conscience be so tender, Mr. Deane,—or your imagination so active. That fellow Crane appears to be no more than a tourist. He has done nothing overt since his arrival. And if he does try to meddle in our affairs, we are prepared to

handle him. Gentlemen, I move that we ballot on the question of 'dividends or no dividends'."

The manager was about to second the motion, when the tramp of heavy boots was heard, crushing the gravel on the winding avenue. All looked in that direction. A number of Japanese were approaching.

Obviously they were laborers, for they wore the costume of the cane-fields, although they carried no knives. Each wore a pair of thick-soled shoes, laced high on the calf. Their clothing was of blue cotton. It was clean, though old and patched. They wore no hats, but the head of each man was enveloped in a red handkerchief, tied beneath the chin, so that his features projected grotesquely from the center of the folds.

"Who are they, and what brings them here?" inquired the president.

"I remember them," answered Atten. "These are the cane-cutters who claim they were defrauded. I guess they've come to demand what they call 'their rights'."

"Set the dogs on them," suggested the manager.

"Now, gentlemen! nothing hasty," the president counselled. "Let's give them a hearing. Of course, we shall have to uphold our manager. But it would hardly do to give those people an opportunity to say we had refused to listen to their case."

With a quick and confident step, the Japanese ascended the verandah. Fresh from a conference with Kenneth Crane, they were primed with assurance. Their leader, Wanto, dashed the hand-

kerchief from his head and advanced to address the meeting. His followers gathered in a group behind him.

Wanto was an elderly man. He had commenced life as a fisherman. He had served many years in the Japanese navy. He had gone from the navy into the British merchant service, where his "eyes had grown dim with gazing on the pilot stars." At last he had come to the Hawaiian Isles as a plantation laborer, for sailor-like he never had accumulated any property. But, while he was no richer than any of his followers, they respected him for his experience and his education, which—in its way—was considerable.

"Well, what do you want?" growled the manager, between puffs on a cigarette.

"We want what belongs to us," answered Wanto. "At the plantation we came to you, Mr. Manager, and you referred us to Mr. Atten. We went to Mr. Atten, and he told us to come before the next meeting of the directors. Now, here we are. The manager knows the facts of the case. So does Mr. Atten. Do we get our rights?"

While Wanto's command of English was very good, he may not have expressed himself quite as above. However, such was the substance of what he said.

"Please state their case, Mr. Atten," the president requested.

"I understand it to be no more than a question of a day's pay," was the secretary's response. "These fellows claimed that the book-keeper, in making out the accounts, neglected to credit them

for one day's work. They appealed to the manager. He understands the Japanese nature—greedy and grasping to the last degree. He saw at once that their claim was no more than an impudent attempt at graft. He told them so. They went on a strike. This particular bunch had shown themselves to be trouble-makers, and we were glad to let them go.”

“Then all they want is one day's pay.”

“No, sir,” answered Wanto. “We must not only be paid for that day, but also we must be paid in full for every day that we have lost.”

The directors leaned back in their chairs and laughed. “There's Japanese impudence for you!”

“You call our demands ‘Japanese impudence,’” answered Wanto. “Do you suppose we would make any such demand if we had no cause? Since we left your plantation—a plantation where the mules have better quarters than the men—you have given us a bad name throughout the Islands. You have put us on the black-list. You have made it impossible for us to secure employment anywhere. Last week, when the Portuguese ran from the W plantation, we applied for their places. We were refused employment, although the plantation was in most urgent need of men. You are the ones who are responsible for our being idle, and you will have to pay for every idle day.

“And if you don't pay in full, things will begin to happen,” added Wanto.

“Oh, you threaten us, do you?” snorted Atten. “Gentlemen, I call on you to be witnesses of that speech,” and then added, addressing the Japanese,

"Well, what are you going to do about it?"

But Wanto was at fault. His manner was undecided. He inquired,

"Is Mr. Kenneth Crane here?"

"He is not here."

"What have you done with him?" and Wanto was very suspicious.

"Mr. Crane has not appeared before this meeting, and we know nothing of his plans. Has he been talking to you?"

"Yes."

"Oh! Once more I ask you to be witnesses to what this man says," and Atten turned with a triumphant air to his associates, as he added in a lower tone, "We'll get that fellow." Then he asked the Japanese,

"What did Crane have to say to you?"

But Wanto wouldn't tell. However, he had lost a large share of his self-confidence. He turned an uneasy glance towards the avenue, as though he hoped to see Crane come in sight. But he only saw a boy on a bicycle. There seemed to be a hitch in Wanto's program.

The boy jumped from his wheel and ran up the steps to the verandah.

"Message for Mr. Frank Atten," he called.

Atten accepted and signed for the message. As he read it, his associates saw his face light up. Waving the paper toward the Japanese, he said,

"If you fellows are looking for Crane, I can tell you where to find him. He's in jail."

"Read us the message," cried the president.

Atten read as follows,

"Dear Mr. Atten:

Crane has been in conference with the Japanese. This morning I followed him to their cabin. He made them an offer, and I have the evidence to prove it. I swore out a warrant, and Mr. Kenneth Crane is now behind the bars.

John Carding."

Here was a sudden change of program for Wanto. He turned to his followers and addressed them in their own language, for some of them understood no English. Their confident air disappeared. Slowly they shuffled from the verandah. Lingering on the foot-path, they began to confer among themselves.

As the Japanese lost their confidence, the treasurer's returned. His spirits rose as rapidly as theirs had fallen.

"Gentlemen, I propose that we drop the discussion on which we were engaged," he said. "Let us continue our present policy," and then he called to the messenger,

"Here, boy! Don't go. There's an answer," and he wrote as follows:

My dear Mr. Carding:

I am rushing to send you a bonus and my heartiest congratulations on the splendid work you are doing. It compares favorably with that of any professional, and is a credit to you and to Mr. Atten for employing you. Please accept an extra \$100. Find check herewith.

Don't forget, when you travel past Pearl Harbor, to make a flying jump from the train, and drop in on us at our home. Mrs. Deane wants to see how the university has affected you. She thought that education might have a relaxing effect, but I am sure it didn't.

Sincerely yours,

Charles. W. Deane.

He signed, sealed and delivered the note to the messenger. Then he said,

"Gentlemen, I propose the health of Mr. John Carding!"

All applauded. The Chinese steward brought iced drinks. They stood to drink the toast.

"Another idea occurs to me," said Deane. "Why not take a short vacation? My motor-yacht is in commission. I have been planning to invite you to be my guests for a cruise—a week's shark-hunting and tuna-fishing in the lochs of Pearl Harbor. Fishermen report a school of fourteen-foot man-eaters in the western loch. Why not take that vacation now? Will you honor me by accepting my hospitality for the coming week?"

"Delighted," "Agreed," "Most happy to come," they answered.

"Your invitation is most opportune in my case," said the president. "You know my wife and family are away, on a visit to the mainland. I'm tired of keeping bachelor's hall. And allow me to make a suggestion. Let us meet at the City—I mean the Cosmos Club this evening."

"And from the club I can take you in my limousine to Pearl City," added Deane.

"But how about the prisoner, Crane?" Atten asked. "We shall have to appear in court against him!"

No hurry about that," answered the president. "Let him stay in jail till we are ready. Let him lie for a week in solitary confinement in the city prison. It will take some of the assertiveness out of him."

Just then he noticed that the cane-cutters still stood below the verandah. He leaned over the railing.

"Here you! We'll do nothing for you," he called. "You had your say. Now get off my premises."

The manager added a few cursory remarks in Japanese. They moved slowly away, muttering among themselves.

In the meantime, a Chinese servant, obedient to a hint from "Foxy Grandpa," had scurried to the rear of the residence, where he loosed two German wolf-hounds. Heralded by a tremendous, bellowing bay, their enormous heads and frothing jaws appeared around a corner of the mansion. The Japanese caught one glimpse, then disappeared briskly down the winding avenue.

Deane couldn't help laughing with the rest, while they watched the picture made by the Japanese, flying down the avenue, followed by the ferocious brutes. But the sight of Atten, rocking back and forth in his chair, slapping the table, and fairly shouting with laughter, sobered him.

"We're a heartless lot," Deane said. "We won't pay those poor devils a cent, we won't let them work for anyone else, and then we set the dogs on them. That's because we have the power, and the law on our side. But I almost feel half sorry for them."

"Poor Charley! Soft-hearted as ever," said the president. "Soft-headed, too," he thought.

"All's fair in war," said Atten, "They'll not bother us again. Just think of their insolence! intruding on a gentleman's grounds, rushing

right up to the verandah of his private residence, and assuming the tone that those curs assumed. Why not get out a warrant, and have them jailed for disturbing the peace?"

"But we can't make any such charge," Deane answered.

"Oh, I don't know. We might stretch things a little. You know the definition of a lie,—An abomination to the Lord, but a very present help in time of trouble."

"We don't seem to be in any trouble at present," said the president. "We had better reserve those extreme methods until their need arises. But it was amusing to see how they came down, when they knew that their friend Crane was locked up."

"Those who take up the sword, shall perish by the sword," Deane quoted piously. "There's a wonderful truth in that. Now, we have always followed the paths of peace and legality, and how we have prospered! And our prosperity has brought us all the good things of life, with as few of its cares and anxieties as could be expected. Our property is in such a form that returns roll in without our troubling ourselves to do more than count the cash. And we live in a delightful land, in a glorious climate. We have beautiful homes. We have yachts and clubs and automobiles."

"And we have in anticipation the pleasure of being the guests of Mr. Deane for a week's shark-hunting and tuna-fishing in the lochs of Pearl Harbor," added the president.

We may explain parenthetically that Pearl

Harbor was divided into three arms by its peninsulas. Those arms were known locally as lochs.

While Deane talked, they had been rising from the table. The meeting broke up. At nine p. m. they would come together again at the Cosmos Club.

They were smiling and joking as they prepared to go, but their sentiments might have been different had they known that at that very minute Crane was being released on bail—bail furnished by lieutenant Sherrill. His release would be brought to their attention that night.

XIV

NIGHT WORK

HONOLULU at night! The city resting beneath the great tropical stars that peered down between the palms; the air made murmurous by the rustling of branches and the slow rumbling of surf on the distant reef.

The time was nearly eight o'clock that evening. Crane was on his way to a conference with Wanto. He stopped on a corner for a moment, to take one more look at his map beneath the light of the arc-lamp; then folded the paper to fit his pocket and turned to follow his Hawaiian guide through the gloom of Punchbowl street.

Each man carried an electric torch. While the electric lights at the crossings spilled brilliant splashes of illumination, between those islands of light lay long stretches of darkness or semi-darkness, for the narrow street was heavily shaded by trees growing close behind low walls of coral rock. Crane saw the dim outlines of gigantic banyans from India, of mango trees from Sumatra, of oaks from Australia. Their limbs drooped over the road, screening it from the starlight. The odors from the trees, filling the night with the breath of Oceanica, kept suggesting things rich and exotic.

How different this part of town was from the commercial and Oriental quarters! Here were no

blocks lined with stores. Here were no hotels of massive concrete, or banks built of volcanic stone. It was true there were hotels and clubs, but all were set within spacious grounds, behind walls and hedges. Scarcely a sound came from them to break the quiet of the night.

The way was not an orthodox city avenue. It was very unorthodox, for it pursued a devious, rambling course. Narrow and sinuous, it seemed more like a trail than a street. Once an electric car dashed across, a hundred yards away. They heard its clang and whir, but could see nothing, for it was beyond a bend.

But, spite of its eccentric twists and curves, Punchbowl street led steadily toward the old volcanic cone of Punchbowl. A mile from the harbor they turned aside into a trail, for they were at the foot of the crater-wall. The Hawaiian boy led the way straight up a narrow, break-neck track, which zig-zagged just enough to keep its grip on the rocks. Ten minutes of climbing and they were at the top, where, standing on the very verge, they stopped to breathe.

They stood upon the crater's ragged rim, where once volcanic fires had roared and blazed. All silent now; the mountains lay in peace. Five hundred feet below, the city slept, the starlight falling upon it with a vague luster. Except for a few far noises from the distant wharves, not a sound broke the quiet of the bland tropical night.

In the harbor the lights of warships glowed upon the water, reflected in long yellow lines that trembled to the whisper of the air. A ship's bell

clanging through the night, proclaimed the hour. Crane counted the strokes.

"Eight bells," he thought. "Eight p. m. I'm in good time," and he turned to follow his guide.

Within that old crater there was no deep depression, such as lay within the circle of Diamond Head. In some pre-historic age a torrent of volcanic sand had been rained down from the higher hills and had filled it almost to the brim. The flat sandy surface was covered with cultivated fields. Here and there the homes of natives showed vaguely.

The night was clear. Up here there was no need for electric torches. Following a path which ran between the little fields, Crane and his guide came to the camp of the Japanese.

It was a makeshift affair—a single hut, built from the flimsiest of materials. The posts and ridge-pole and rafters were of bamboo. The walls and roof were made from grass mats. Across the roof a single sheet of canvas had been stretched by guy-ropes strongly pinned to the ground on either side. Tall palm trees arched above it, fluttering their fronds in the gentle air, in silhouette against the stars.

Within the cabin dim lights were burning. Crane heard his guide exchanging muttered sentences with someone who stood just inside the entrance. Then he was ushered into the place.

It was a single room. Down its center there ran a rough table, where the men were finishing their evening rice. On the table were thick white bowls and chopsticks. A row of cane-knives on

the wall caught Crane's eye. The knives were thrust between the halves of a long piece of bamboo, split lengthwise, and bound together with a winding of cord at either end. Crane saw no signs of sleeping-places, but judged that the men slept in the open air, unless compelled to take shelter within the cabin when an occasional shower drifted down from the hills.

Their leader, Wanto, was bowing before him. All rose and greeted Crane. Then the men returned to their rice, while the Californian and Wanto settled themselves for a conference.

"The reason I sent for you," Wanto explained, "was that I might tell what occurred to-day at the meeting in Manoa valley."

"But do you know why I was unable to be there?" Crane asked.

"Yes, sir; we learned that you were in prison. They told us so at the meeting. But, as soon as we returned to our camp, we received a message that you were at liberty again. The agent who pays us our monthly allowance, sent us the message."

"My arrest was a trick," answered Crane, "a trick to tie me up so that I could not carry out any plan I might have made. And the trick worked very smoothly. But tell me about the meeting."

Which Wanto proceeded to do. He spoke of the confidence with which he and his men had approached the meeting, of their surprise at not finding Kenneth Crane there, and of the insulting treatment given them.

"They set the dogs on us," he exclaimed, "Yes, sir, they drove us from the place with wolf-hounds. If we had had our cane-knives with us, those dogs would not have lasted a minute. But we had left our knives here," and Wanto pointed to the wall. "You suggested that we go as peacefully as possible, so as to cause no suspicion. But how we would have loved to destroy those dogs!"

Crane noticed the hot blood flushing beneath the swarthy skin of the Japanese, and he inquired,

"Have you been a soldier in the Japanese army, Wanto?"

"No, sir. But I have been a man-o'-warsman in the Japanese navy. I was in the battle of Sushima, when we destroyed the Russian Baltic fleet. We showed the Russians what the Japanese can do! And now these fellows set their dogs on me!"

"Never mind, Wanto. We'll get them yet. We'll make another plan."

"By all means! I'd love to get those fellows in my power! I'd teach them respect for workmen. Now, they drive us like vermin from their presence. But wait till I hold them!"

"Well, did you learn when they will meet again?"

"They said nothing about another business-meeting. At present they plan to spend a week, or two weeks, shark-hunting and tuna-fishing in the lochs of Pearl Harbor."

An idea flashed into Crane's mind. He turned a rapid-fire of questions on Wanto.

"Are all of them to be in the party?"

"Yes,."

"When will they start for Pearl Harbor?"

"To-night. They will meet at the Cosmos Club at nine o'clock."

"That means they may not start before ten. How will they travel?"

"In Mr. Deane's limousine."

"I see. I see," and Crane chuckled and rubbed his hands together as he rose to take a few steps backward and forward. The plan which had dawned upon him was taking definite shape in his mind. He settled himself once more by the side of Wanto.

"See here," he said. "I think our opportunity has come. We have the four men we want, just where we can take them. Let me explain. North of Honolulu, the road to Pearl Harbor passes through a canyon. That canyon lies between the wall of Salt Lake crater and the hills. There we can stop their machine. The road is very quiet. At night it is deserted. There is no possibility of a witness. After we have taken the men, we can lead them in an hour to the place where I mean to hold them. What do you say? Shall we start for the road at once...."

The plan was plausible and pleased the Japanese. In a torrent of speech, Wanto explained it to the men. All jumped to their feet, and preparations began for an instant change of camp.

The cabin came to pieces as if by magic, Ridge-pole and rafters were bound together, mats and canvas were wrapped around them, half a dozen men put their shoulders beneath the long, sausage-shaped package, while the rest of the party shouldered bundles of bedding and baggage.

Fifteen men made light work of the task. In ten minutes they were ready to start.

Studying the map by the light of their electric torches, Crane and his guide had been planning a route which would take them through the most quiet and sequestered part of Honolulu.

"All ready!" The long line of shadowy figures moved across the crater, Crane and the Hawaiian boy leading the way. From the crater they descended to residential streets, dark with the shade of many trees. Some were as gloomy as Punchbowl street itself, though none were so erratic.

The men pressed onward briskly, spite of their heavy burdens. Not a word was spoken. Nothing was to be heard save the shuffling of heavy shoes and the quick, sibilant breathing of the men. No chance to meet a patrolman on those quiet avenues. An occasional pedestrian saw nothing but a crew of Japanese, probably returning from the cane-fields.

Through the town they went. Now it became scattered and countrified. Rice-fields and market gardens alternated with little homes, all dim and vague beneath the glimmer of the stars. Circling a great, walled enclosure where was a school for Hawaiian boys, the party came to the King street line.

Now Crane was on ground which he knew thoroughly. The guide was dismissed with a liberal reward. The party plodded northward, past the end of the line, and past Fort Shafter. They came to the canyon leading to the polo-field.

On their left rose the rocky wall of the canyon, a hundred feet high. On their right lay the stream-bed, concealed beneath its clustering trees. Only the road showed white before them, a ribbon which kept unrolling as they went.

How mysterious the place seemed! As they hurried along, a sea of impressions might have surged through their minds,—thoughts which might be set down in short, jerky sentences,—fragments of recollections, questions, hopes and fears. But somehow they seemed to have no time to think. Probably their minds were not of the introspective sort. All minds were bent on progress, for only a little farther on was the place where they would set the trap.

Just beyond the entrance to the valley where lay the polo-ground, the road ascended a short, steep grade. There Deane's machine would have to slacken speed, and there Crane's party stopped. Posts were driven into the ground on either side of the way. The canvas sheet was stretched between them and securely fastened with its guy-ropes. Below this barricade, for a hundred yards, the men stationed themselves at short intervals. They would stand by the wayside, and when the machine arrived and they came into the glare of its headlights, they would jump and shout and wave a warning to let the driver know there was "danger ahead," for they had no wish that he should actually charge their barricade. It was only a blind.

Crane consulted his watch. Ten o'clock! They might be there at any minute.

So far, all had been hurry and rush. The minds of all had been occupied by the desire to "get ahead." Now there was nothing to do but wait. Now they grew nervous under the strain of listening, and doubts began to crop up. What if some other machine should arrive before the one they expected? But there was little chance of that. Automobiles were few on that road, even by day-time. And this was night, when usually there were none.

And then came the question, What would they do with the auto? If they left it in the canyon, it would be found next morning. Inquiries would be made for the occupants. All the country in that vicinity would be searched. It would lead certainly to the discovery of the prisoners.

But the time had gone by for figuring on that problem. A low ejaculation from one of the men warned Crane. He bent his head to listen.

The car was coming. Faint and far at first, then growing nearer and clearer, the sound drifted toward them through the pure night air. The great limousine, with unmuffled exhaust, was roaring along the road.

Now the car was entering the canyon. The rocky walls re-echoed and redoubled the noise. Nearer and nearer. "All ready." Then a tremendous burst of acetylene light, a cloud of dust, a vision of dark figures leaping and gesticulating by the wayside, a hurricane of yells, a mad squealing of brakes recklessly applied, and the car stood panting where it almost touched the barricade.

Doors were thrown open. Heads were thrust out. Charley Deane relinquished the wheel and jumped to the road with the rest. The manager and officers of the X Sugar Company gathered before the canvas screen, wondering why the way was barred.

But they did not see the brown figures stealing up behind them. In an instant loops of cord had been thrown around the arms and legs of each. The Japanese, quick as cats and strong as tigers, were upon them. Even the ponderous Atten was tripped and tied.

Of course, there was a series of outcries. But those cries were stopped instantly with wads of cotton-waste, thrust into the mouths of the prisoners. Then they were rudely jerked to their feet. Each was held from behind, while in front a pugnacious Jap flourished a "ferocious-looking" cane-knife. The light of the head-lamps flashed on the cold steel.

Crane came before their line to pronounce his ultimatum. He drew a deep breath and looked them over. His prisoners! So arrogant a few brief hours before! Now, a dejected group of captives. His to command! Well, he must let them feel his authority.

"Listen to me," he said, "If you will come with us peacefully, no particular harm will be done to you. Your feet will be untied, and you can walk comfortably. But, if you won't come peacefully, you'll come anyhow, and you'll be the worse for wear."

One by one, each of the prisoners bowed in

submission. Their feet were unfastened. All were ready to start. But how about the limousine?

Crane decided to run it up to the polo-field for the time-being. That was done, and the party turned toward the hills and plunged into the deep ravine which held the trail. Up the rough track they went. Broken bits of rock rattled under foot. All of the prisoners were men grown soft, and unaccustomed to hill-climbing. They would have fared badly had not a pair of Japanese been behind each, pushing him forward, supporting half his weight. But, with such help, progress was swift. In an hour's time, they were approaching the bungalow.

White and ghostly in the starlight, it loomed before them. Crane hurried to the door to try his bunch of keys. Key after key rattled in the lock and was rejected. Would none fit? Then came the grating of a bolt, the creak of rusty hinges, and a black square revealed by the door slowly swinging. Crane picked up his electric torch and flashed its glare within the house.

So far, all he had known of its interior had been what he could glimpse through the windows. Some of the shades had been drawn. He had been able to learn but little. Now he looked around him with eager curiosity. The rest of the party waited outside, glad of a chance to ease their throbbing lungs.

The door gave directly into a room which resembled the cabin of a sailing-ship. It was square, with a square table in its center, and above that table a broad skylight where hung a bronze

lamp. Guy-chains ran from the body of the lamp to the corners of the skylight. The walls of the room were ornamented with nautical views. The pictures were not hung by wires, but the frames were firmly screwed to the panelling. In each picture a four-masted ship, flying the American flag, was conspicuous. The whole place had a flavor as "salty" as the ocean itself.

On the left hand a door gave entrance to the kitchen which Crane had noticed as fitted up like a ship's galley or kitchen. At the rear of the room there were two doors which he hurried to open.

It was as he expected; they opened into bedrooms—rooms fitted up like the state-rooms of a steamer. In each he saw a pair of berths. Everything was as neat and tidy as though the steward just then had finished his work.

Good! Here were four sleeping-places. There would be no difficulty about providing proper quarters for the prisoners. But Crane's mind recurred to the motor-car, left standing at the edge of the polo-ground. While one of the Japanese knelt on the table, coaxing a light to the wick of the lamp, he returned to the porch, and signed to his men to free the mouths of the prisoners.

"Who is the owner of the car?" he inquired.

Deane stepped forward.

"There are two ways in which I can dispose of your machine," said Crane. "I can run it into Pearl Harbor, at a place where it will sink. Or you can give me a note to the manager of the

garage in Honolulu, where you are accustomed to leave it, and I will drive the car into the city and leave it in his care. Now, will you write that note?"

Certainly, Mr. Deane would write that note. His fountain-pen came out. So did a sheet from his note-book. Now the lamp above the table was ablaze. Beneath its light he wrote as follows:

Manager of the Crossroads Garage:

Dear Sir:

Please care for my machine until I call for it.

Yours,

Charles W. Deane.

Crane glanced over the message.

"Where is this garage?"

"Right opposite the big hotel."

"Very well, Mr. Deane. Your car will be returned to the city." and he ran down the trail.

As he drove the car back to town, humming toward Honolulu's commercial quarter, Crane decided it would be safer not to traverse the downtown district. No knowing whom he might meet. Better to attract as little attention as possible. He turned aside, and followed a circuitous course which led him through the shadows and silence of Punchbowl street.

As the car swept along beneath the trees, the place seemed to blend with the spirit of the evening's adventure. What a night of plot and mystery it had been!

And what a day it had been! Crane's thoughts

turned back on the events of the last twelve hours. In jail at noon; bailed out a few hours later; the arrival of the native guide with the summons from Wanto; the walk by night to Punchbowl; the sudden decision; the rush to the Pearl City road; the breathless wait and the quick capture; the ascent to the bungalow, where now Crane's enemies were his prisoners, guarded by men who hated them for their frauds and for the contempt in which they held their employees.

Down the quiet avenue he came. It brought him nearly to the garage, which he reached a minute later. He jumped out, thrust the note into the hand of a sleepy helper, and made his exit before any questions could be asked.

The time was not yet midnight when he entered the lobby of the big hotel. Brilliantly illuminated by arcs and incandescents, how its sophisticated and citified tone contrasted with the scenes through which he had come that night! Mentally he compared the great lobby, with its thick carpets and gorgeous upholstery and oil-paintings in gilded frames, its palms and bronzes and panelled walls, with the cabin of the Japanese. Well, he could rejoin them to-morrow. To-night, he might as well occupy his quarters in the hotel—and he entered the elevator.

It seemed as though the boy studied Crane with a curious air. Crane's suspicions were on the alert, and it was time they should be, if he meant to carry his program through successfully. He felt for a dollar, which he donated to the boy.

"Has anyone been prying around, making inquiries concerning me?" he inquired.

"Why, yes, sir," the boy answered, "After you went out this evening, a young fellow was scattering half-dollar tips all over the hotel. He wants the boys to keep tab on you, and let him know where you go. His name is Carding."

XV

THROUGH DUST AND FOAM

AT NINE o'clock the next morning, Crane was sitting in the lobby of the hotel. He must get back to the bungalow, and he must throw Carding off his track. He pondered the problem of—how to do it. A dozen schemes presented themselves. In imagination he saw himself on the brink of the Pali, removing the rails of the wooden fence which guarded the precipice. He saw Carding pursuing him in a motor-car. He saw the machine shoot over the brink, plunging into space. It did not go tumbling over and over, but fell straight and steady, as though held by an invisible hand. Down, down, it went, a thousand feet and more. All four wheels seemed to strike the ground together. And then it disappeared. There was a flash of fire, a puff of gray dust, and it was gone.

But he decided that a method so spectacular and bloodthirsty would hardly do in a civilized community in the twentieth century, however appropriate it might be in a motion-picture drama. A more reasonable plan came to his mind. There was no need for delay. He hurried out, to put it into execution.

On the opposite side of the street and facing the hotel, stood the Crossroads Garage. Crane waited in the office while a chauffeur was filling the gasoline tank of the machine which he engaged.

And, somewhere about the premises, he believed that Carding was lurking, ready to follow him wherever he went.

"It's about time I gave that fellow the slip," he thought, "and I believe I'll do it this time."

While he waited, he leaned back in a wide wicker chair and watched the hotel across the street. Its square front, its square doors and square windows, gave it a most uncompromising air. A number of tourists were leaving the main entrance. They looked very spotless and comfortable, the men in cool "Palm Beach cloth," the ladies in voiles. Before them walked a guide, escorting them to the Capitol grounds:—"Right this way, ladies; we'll show you everything."

Crane recollected how short a time it was since he had been as new to the island as they were, and then his meditations were interrupted by the chauffeur, who came to tell him the car was ready.

Presently the machine was bowling up an avenue which ran through the pass in the hills behind the city. Crane leaned back on the cushions and watched the brilliant tropical pictures as they flitted by. He caught sight of an avenue of royal palms leading through a luxurious garden to the portal of a mansion, their straight smooth trunks showing like lines of columns in a classic temple; of a great iron gateway guarding the entrance to an enclosure where lay the tombs of the kings; of a purple-flowered vine shading a portico; of a group of Japanese girls coming into the city, their dainty kimonos as fresh as the flowers they carried in their hands.

The freshness, the light, the color all around him, called to his love for the out-of-doors, for his heart was young enough to respond to the subtle persuasion of sunlight and color. His eyes drank up the pictures.

How delightful it was to be rolling through these scenes, without effort, on the cushions of a motor-car! The absence of all exertion seemed to add the last element necessary for complete enjoyment.

They were deep within the valley, now. The road serpentine from side to side in long loops. On either hand the valley-walls rose so steeply that they seemed walls indeed. Over those hills, from bottom to top, the many tints of the tropical jungle wove a gorgeous pattern.

"What a glorious drive!" he thought. "High hills on either hand, and gardens all around us; swinging underneath the palms, on a road as smooth as velvet. I'd like to go on riding up and down this road forever."

As they went, Crane explained his plan to the chauffeur. They would cross the island to its eastern shore. They would stop at a place on the margin of the bay, where a missionary had built a rest-house for the use of those who might be traveling around the island and who were belated. Below the rest-house he had built a wharf, where a motor-boat lay moored, for the use of its owner's friends and acquaintances. Crane would pose as a friend. With the launch he would escape Carding easily, for it was the only boat of its kind on the bay. When he thought of Carding, he rose in his

place and looked backward. Another car was following at a distance of half a mile.

Losing no time, they reached the place Crane had in mind, for it transpired that the chauffeur knew its exact location. But Crane's plan was like other "plans of mice and men." The motorboat was gone.

"If you are very anxious to get around to the other side of the island by water," said the chauffeur, "there is a little steamer which carries sugar from the W plantation to Honolulu. I could take you in the car to the plantation."

"How about the deputy-sheriffs? They're an officious set."

"They were called in yesterday. The owners were afraid of damage suits."

Hurriedly Crane unfurled his map. A track led southward from the place where he stood. It joined the main road at a point perhaps two miles back. He indicated the point to the chauffeur.

"Take the car and wait for me there. I'll walk across. But if you meet anyone who wants to know where I am, send him here," and he disappeared down a path densely shaded with algeroba trees.

All this had passed in a twinkling. In another twinkle, the car was turned around and was re-traveling the main highway. It had not gone two hundred yards when it was met by Carding's machine, which stopped squarely in the middle of the road.

"Where did you leave your passenger?" Carding asked.

"At the boat-landing," the man answered, and he mentioned the name of the landing's owner.

"Much obliged. I want to have a talk with that fellow," and the machines separated and went on, each on its own course. But at the landing there was no sign of Crane or of the motor-launch.

"He can't have gotten away in the boat, or we'd see it," and Carding scanned the surface of the bay.

After wasting half an hour in a profitless search of the vicinity, he decided to think the matter over. For a while he studied the situation. And then a light burst upon him.

"What a fool I am!" he thought. "I've been lured over here on purpose, for that fellow has no business on this side of the island. He lured me over here to lose me. He's gone half a mile down the road, rejoined his machine, and now he's speeding back to Honolulu. And he thinks he has me here, hunting for him. Well, I'll spoil that plan," and dismissing all thoughts of pursuit from his mind, he jumped into the machine and directed the chauffeur to return to the city.

Meanwhile, Crane was following the lower road. About the time that Carding decided to return to Honolulu, Crane was re-entering his auto and was beginning the journey to the W plantation. Once again he could lean back on the deep cushions and study the tropical pictures.

The machine swung softly along a red-dirt road. Above them hung the cliffs. Miles to the left lay the sea. Now the road was crossing a rolling range of little hills. At one point it ran in full

view of a pack-trail, cut in the foot of the cliff where it sloped out to join the plain. The side of the trail made a deep red scar against the green. It was shaded with tall ferns, and beneath it the ground was covered thick with vines. Along the track a line of mules were moving. Two Hawaiian muleteers, picturesque rascals with broad-brimmed hats, kept the animals in motion.

Although there was no sunshine, for the weather was very gray on the windward side of the island, the combination of cliffs and ferns and trail and pack-train appealed to Crane as the most ideally tropical picture he had seen in the island. It seemed to breathe an air of remoteness and romance. It harmonized with his boyhood dreams of the tropics.

He could enjoy the landscapes all the more when he thought how satisfactorily events were shaping out. Certain that Carding had been left hopelessly "at sea," he began to regard the trip as a sort of triumphal progress. With the enemy outwitted, he might return unnoticed, in the plantation steamer, to the harbor, and get back to the bungalow, if not precisely in the role of conquering hero, at least unspied upon.

The machine topped the last rise, where he could overlook the whole of the W plantation. The chauffeur pointed toward the distant shore.

"There's the boat now, and they have steam up," he said.

So far the car had been traveling at a very moderate rate, for the man had been warned at the garage to "take no chances with that gas-

wagon." Now he removed the muffler. The car darted down the grade and across the plain. They rolled between deep fields of cane, the sound of the steamer's whistle in their ears, and when they reached the shore ran up the little wharf, the heavy machine rumbling over the planks.

Smoke pouring from its funnel, the little black-hulled steamship Manoa still lay there. Its lines were being cast loose. Crane settled with the chauffeur, ran across the wharf, and jumped to the deck of the vessel.

He was confronted by a short, sandy-haired man. The man's beard was closely cropped, but his mustache was very luxuriant. Captain John Peterson was master of the Manoa.

"You can't travel in this vessel, young man," he said. "We carry no passengers."

"Just this once, captain," Crane pleaded. "I have a very important reason for wanting to make the trip," and he tendered a twenty-dollar gold piece.

The gold-piece made a difference. Peterson reconsidered the matter. "But if this gets out," he said, "they may fine me five hundred dollars."

"I guarantee that I won't tell," answered Crane, and he raised his right hand very solemnly.

Peterson studied Crane's face. It seemed to re-assure him. Slowly his fingers closed over the twenty-dollar piece. The coin found a haven in Peterson's pocket.

"All right," he said, and turned to the wheel-house. "The cabin is aft there," he called over his shoulder, and he indicated a companion-way.

Crane descended a narrow flight of stairs which led down into the little cabin, but he found its atmosphere overpowering. Hawaiian sugar is not the pure white article we see on our tables. It is a crude brown sugar, which must be shipped to the mainland, there to be refined. It has a slight odor. In a vessel which has been employed for years in carrying cargoes of Hawaiian sugar, the odors of all the cargoes that the boat has carried seem to accumulate and build, the one on the other, until the vessel's hull reeks. What had seemed hardly more than a spicy aroma while he was on deck, quickly drove him up to the open air.

But he carried a camp-stool with him, which he placed on the after-deck. There he sat, watching the surf and the shore. He heard the engine-room bell clanging for "full speed" or "slow" as the *Manoa* threaded the channel. White patches of coral showed on either hand, the water lying glassy green above them. Overhead there fluttered a tropic-bird, its two long scarlet plumes streaming behind it. Shoreward, Crane saw the white crescent of coral beach, and beyond it the fields of the plantation. They were over-shadowed by tremendous cliffs, rising sheer and unscalable two thousand feet or more above the plain. On board the steamer the men who had been loading the cargo, now lay on the forward deck, talking and laughing. Crane heard their strange guttural tones and guttural laughter. Presently one of them began to twang an ukulele. What a change from the automobile!

With the strange scent of the sugar hanging

heavy all around him, while the sound of the native music mingled with the unfamiliar tones and unfamiliar language of the men, Crane rested there. The little steamer steered out into the Pacific. The trade-wind was gentle; all indications promised a smooth run to Honolulu.

And a smooth run it was, giving Crane an opportunity to renew his acquaintance with the southern end of the island, with its brown volcanic cones and its green groves of cocoa-palms along the shore.

Keeping just outside the reef, the Manoa rounded Diamond Head. The surf was not nearly so high as it had been on the morning of Crane's arrival. The waves washed over the coral breaking gently. At Waikiki, the afternoon crowds of bathers were on the beach and in the surf. Some were swimming on surf-boards through the breakers. Others were riding the waves in native canoes, which hung just outside the reef until they could get a favorable start on the inner slope of a wave, on which they rode gloriously shoreward.

The steamer was approaching one of the canoes. It was plain they would pass it at very close range. An idea suddenly occurred to Crane. What if Carding had guessed his plan and should be waiting on the wharf? Why not go ashore here and avoid the harbor? He rushed to the wheel-house.

"Captain, will you stop the engines for just a minute, and let me speak to that canoe? I'd like to get them to put me ashore."

The master of the Manoa hesitated. "I guess

it would be a good plan," he answered. "If the authorities caught me landing you on the wharf, they might ask embarrassing questions," and he rang the signals for "slow" and "stop." The bell for "slow" seemed superfluous, for the steamship was very deliberate in its movements. Speed never had been contemplated when it was designed. They drifted within thirty feet of the canoe.

It was an out-rigger, of the orthodox, native type, hollowed out from the trunk of a palm tree. Two native boatmen plied the paddles. A third paddle was held by their passenger—a white man.

He was a young man of about Crane's age, and was obviously a tourist. Staring at the steamer, wondering what was wanted, he and his men waited. One of the Manoa's crew began making voluble explanations to the men. Crane addressed the tourist.

"I beg your pardon, sir. I am in a great hurry to get ashore. There are special reasons why I want to land on the beach, instead of going around by way of the harbor. If you'll be so kind as to put me ashore, I'll be everlastingly grateful."

The young man was an American and a good fellow. "Sure, I will," he cried, and dipped his paddle into the water to bring the canoe to the steamer's side. "But I'm afraid you'll get a ducking, going through the surf." He and his men were in bathing costume.

"Never mind," answered Crane; "I guess I'll have to take the ducking," and he stepped into the boat, where he squatted in front of one of its men.

"Good-bye, captain," he called, and he heard the steamer's bell ringing for "full speed," as the boatmen paddled away, to resume their wait for a favorable wave. One came, almost on the instant. The paddles dug desperately into the water, their strokes came like lightning, the men shouted as they bent to the work, and then they were riding shoreward at express-train speed on the landward face of a breaker which roared and surged and tumbled behind them. Watching beach and palms growing larger and nearer, Crane nervously gripped the sides of the canoe with both hands, his straw hat pressed down over his ears, as he faced the rush of the wind. Far over the smooth surface of the lagoon they flew, and then the men paddled the canoe quietly up to a little wharf.

Crane stepped onto the wooden landing. He thanked the tourist heartily, while donating half a dollar apiece to the boatmen.

The landing belonged to a private residence. Crane hurried through the grounds. His clothes were fairly dry. It's true his coat had soaked up more or less salt water from the flying spray, but it was drying rapidly in the tropical sunshine. He came out on the public highway.

On the farther side of the road there was a public park. It extended to the very foot of Diamond Head. The rough scarred walls of the old crater rose, bare and brown, above the trees. In the center of the park there stretched a great oval of emerald turf.

That oval once had been a race-track. In the

days of the Hawaiian monarchy, when gambling was rife and stakes ran high, large sums of money had changed hands on the course. Since then, the automobile had come in, the horse had gone out. Horse-racing had become one of the "lost arts." The oval had been converted into a military aviation-field.

Crane heard the buzzing of an aeroplane. An aviator was at practise, wheeling and whirling above the field. Down through the air the biplane dropped, until it almost touched the turf. With quick recovery of planes it skimmed across the field, then spiraled upward through the azure air, until it seemed to reach the sky. Drawn by a very natural curiosity, Crane came to the edge of the field.

Once more the aviator volplaned toward the turf. This time he landed. Practice was over for that day. "One of the staff-officers, I suppose," Crane thought, as he saw the man climb from his place, while the helpers approached to roll the machine to its hangar. And then he recognized the aviator as lieutenant Sherrill.

Crane had had to do some quick thinking that day. In an instant he recognized the possibilities of the situation, and was racing across the field to meet and greet the lieutenant.

"Mr. Crane," said lieutenant Sherrill.

"Lieutenant Sherrill, I've been watching your evolutions. Would it be possible for you to take me up in your machine?"

"It certainly would," answered the lieutenant, and he turned to his men. "Boys, wait a minute."

"Have you any special object in wishing to make an ascent?" he asked.

"I certainly have. I'm very anxious to get to the top of one of the hills. I don't mean the top of the range, but a point about half-way up. It's a few miles north of Honolulu. If you could put me there, I should be saved a lot of worry."

"What sort of a place is it for landing?"

"Just a narrow ridge, with a trail running through the brush."

The lieutenant considered for a moment. Then he picked up a piece of pliant cord, perhaps fifty feet in length, in which he hurriedly began to tie knots at intervals of about a foot. He fastened it to the framework of the driver's seat.

"If you have the nerve, when we reach the place, to go down this line, hand over hand, and drop off when you touch the trail, I can land you. Otherwise, I cannot."

"Just give me the chance," said Crane. Already he was climbing to the passenger's seat.

The lieutenant sprang to his place, gave one look at the fuel-gauge, and started the engine. Two minutes later they were sailing over the city.

It was Crane's first experience in a flying-machine, and how glorious it seemed. They sailed along at a height of a thousand feet. Straight below them lay the narrow stretch of town which fringed the shore. Before them spread the harbor and the central portion of the city, with its close-packed Oriental quarter. To their right were the rice-fields and the hills; to their left the broad Pacific's azure plain.

The machine was not speeding. At thirty or forty miles an hour it flew. It crossed the city, which lay like a map. Above it they went, until once more they saw rice-fields beneath them. Then the Salt Lake craters opened out, lying like great rings upon the ground, the largest filled with sugar-cane, another with salt water. Crane could see the cottage on the hill. He indicated it to the lieutenant, shouting the words "white cottage" in his ear.

Sherrill saw the little bungalow, and steered straight toward it. Up the trail they flew. And now Crane must descend the rope.

Lowering himself with cautious slowness, he gripped one of the knots and hung in the air. Down, down, crept his hands, until he hung at the very end of the cord. The lieutenant shut off the power. Flying directly against the trade-wind the speed of the machine relative to the ground was slow.

The trail was just beneath Crane. He felt the ground touch his feet. He let go, ran a few steps, lost his balance, and rolled in the grass by the wayside. Meanwhile, the plane dipped down into the ravine. It sank for a moment while Sherrill was starting the motor. Then it whirled away toward the lowlands and toward Honolulu.

Crane picked himself up, brushed the dust from his clothes, and stood watching the flight of the man-made bird, as it skimmed above the distant plain. While he watched it, the events of the day swept in review through his mind.

He thought of his journey by automobile, steamer, canoe and aeroplane. What an experience! Whirled from the exotic color of Honolulu's suburbs; through the green luxuriance of matted cane-fields; then over a turquoise sea and across the breakers of a coral reef, to finish with a final delirious plunge through the sky. Well, here he was. He had returned to the hill, and had thrown Carding off his track.

XVI

THE MASTER OF THE AGAMEMNON

THE four-masted ship Agamemnon, deep laden with a cargo for Honolulu, had sailed from Newcastle, New South Wales, forty days since. Swinging across the South Pacific, with all of its tremendous spread of canvas distended by a snoring southwester, the ship had breezed into the latitude of the Trades, had sailed past a hundred palm-covered coral islands, had been reported "in sight" from the lighthouse at Diamond Head, and at nine o'clock that morning was entering Honolulu harbor, in tow of the tug Kona.

The great ship made a noble picture, abounding in grace and stateliness, a thing of beauty and a delight to the eye, as sunset clouds and gorgeous birds are things of beauty and delightful to the eye. Straining leisurely at the end of a mammoth hawser, the Agamemnon glided between the breakwaters. Its immense yards were neatly squared. Most of its sails were furled, a few still hanging loosely from the spars, where men were aloft and at work. The Stars and Stripes were fluttering from the monkey-gaff.

The Agamemnon was an American steel ship. Its long smooth sides were painted white. Its masts and yards of hollow steel were white. On

account of its color and its speedy voyages, it was popularly known as the Great White Flyer.

Every year the Agamemnon came to Honolulu to carry a cargo of sugar to New York by way of Cape Horn, for on those long voyages a sailing-vessel, with the whole interior of its hull from top to bottom, from end to end, clear space for the stowage of cargo, is a very economical carrier,—no space taken up by expensive boilers and machinery; power furnished by the free winds of heaven. If all went well, the Flyer would leave Honolulu three weeks later, with a full lading.

Captain James Coburn, master of the Agamemnon, stood on the after-deck, while the ship was being towed into Honolulu harbor. He wore a black slouch hat and a suit of dark blue serge. His hands were thrust into the side-pockets of his double-breasted coat. In his mouth was a long cigar.

Captain Coburn had been born and raised "way down east" in the state of Maine. He was square-shouldered and red-faced and gray-whiskered; not over tall, but of great breadth and tremendous strength. His methods of dealing with recalcitrant seamen were his own.

He could put the fear of Coburn into the most disorderly crew that ever tried to argue the point—and do it, not with an automatic, but with his own bull-voice and two hands. A year before, when the Agamemnon lay in Honolulu harbor, ready for sea, with a towboat ahead and the hawser stretched, four of the crew had come to the conclusion that they didn't want to go around

Cape Horn in Captain Coburn's company, and had jumped overboard to swim ashore. But they had neglected to take swimming lessons before they jumped. All their lives they had remained as ignorant of the art as is the average deep-water seaman. There they had floundered at the vessel's side. Coburn had observed their predicament, had loosed some coils of rigging and had allowed the ends to trail overboard for the men to sieze. With the men hanging on the lines, he had signalled the towboat to go ahead. The Agamemnon had left harbor with the men dragging alongside. When the ship was outside and the towline had been cast off, the captain had leaned over the rail to look down at the would-be runaways. There they hung. An inquisitive shark or two sniffed around them.

"Well, boys, do you want to go to New York, or do you want to stay here?" he inquired.

"Oh, for God's sake, captain, take us on board and we'll be good."

Then they were hoisted in, over the rail, while the Great White Flyer spread its sails for Cape Horn and New York.

Such were captain Coburn's methods—simple but effective.

That morning he puffed his cigar with a very complacent air as he noted the neat appearance of his ship. All around him, varnished mahogany and burnished brass and polished paint reflected the tropical sun. He looked across the golden ripple on the water to where the boat-house of the Honolulu Yacht Club rose against a back-

ground of royal palms. A mile away he saw the rusty slopes of Punchbowl, and beyond them the bright green of higher hills, lifting tall summits against a stupendous roll of pearly, trade-wind clouds.

"This is God's own country," he thought, "and we must have a week or two on shore."

As soon as the ship was at the dock, he was ashore, to report the vessel at the custom-house, and to interview the consignees, and to visit the office of the Advertiser to make sure that the paper would note the fact that the Great White Flyer had made the record run of the season from Australia. Later, he took up with his wife and daughter the subject of a vacation on shore.

They were at the lunch-table. The captain's wife sat at his right hand, his daughter at his left. Mrs. Coburn was nearly as solidly and squarely built as her husband, while their daughter—a little girl of twelve—seemed made of chips from both the old blocks.

"What's the use of owning a bungalow if we don't use it?" the captain asked. "It's three years since we spent any time there. I vote that we move into it while the ship's in port."

"But it's so high in the hills," said Mrs. Coburn.

"And what of that? You'll only have to climb there once. Then we'll camp there till we're ready to come down."

"Oh, let's go, ma, and get out of this horrid coal-dust," begged the daughter.

"Good for you, Minnie," said Coburn. "A ship discharging coal is no place for anyone to live, if

they can get away. And we'll have a chance to keep cool up there, too."

This last remark was inspired by the fact that Honolulu harbor seems to have the power to collect twice the heat to be found in any other equal area in the island. Coburn was perspiring freely in his blue serge suit. Now he threw aside his coat and ate in his shirt-sleeves.

The coal settled it. Life on board ship would be a compound of coal-dust and perspiration. While Mrs. Coburn would have preferred to go to a hotel, the others voted for the hills, and to the hills they would go.

Captain Coburn addressed the first mate of the *Agamemnon*. That officer faced the captain at the square table, built for four.

"Mr. Swanson, I'll expect you to take charge of the ship during my absence. You know where the bungalow is, so that you can communicate with me if there is any necessity."

"Yes, sir."

The captain turned to a Chinese boy who, attired in a long, blue gown which was clean and crisp, stepped softly in and out of the room, serving the meal.

"Boy, tell the steward I want him."

"Yes, sir."

The boy returned, a minute later, with the steward—who answered to the name of George. He was an Englishman.

"George, we start for the hills this afternoon. We have a bungalow there, which we make our home while in port. I intend to take you along.

This boy will stay here and look after the officers. He can do it, can't he?"

"Oh, yes, sir! Very easily, sir! A first-class boy, sir."

"Well, make out a list of the stores that we ought to take with us. We may be gone three weeks. Make it out right away. As soon as you have it, call on Mr. Swanson for four men. Give him four of the crew, Mr. Swanson, to get out the stores and carry them up to the bungalow. Have the carpenter nail poles to the sides of two boxes. The men can carry the stuff that way. And, steward, make arrangements at the market to have fresh meat and eggs sent to us every day. Once a day, you understand; not once a week. There's a good stove at the bungalow, and an axe to chop firewood, if nobody has broken in and stolen it."

"Yes, sir. And shall I bring the mosquito-nets?"

"No, no. The place is up in the hills, not in a sugar plantation. Now, get busy."

It was three o'clock that afternoon when captain Coburn stood on the wharf and reviewed his forces. A hack, which would carry himself and family, was in attendance just outside the pier. Also there was an express-wagon which would carry their stores and personal effects. The said stores were packed in two open boxes, to the sides of which the carpenter had nailed strips of one-inch board for handles. Between these pairs of shafts stood four members of the crew. Three more carried the suit-cases. The steward himself

hovered around, racking his brains to make sure that nothing had been forgotten.

"All set, and away we go!" and the captain headed the procession up the pier. His wife and daughter followed at his heels. Behind them came the men with the boxes, while the suit-case carriers and the steward closed the column.

But a tall young man, wearing a brass-bound cap and a blue suit plentifully provided with brass buttons, approached. He tapped one of the boxes with a light bamboo cane.

"Are these things from the Agamemnon?"

"Yes, zur," answered one of the men.

"Then they'll have to pay duty," for the young man was on the staff of the custom-house.

"Holy Mackerel!" ejaculated the captain. "I wonder what these fellows will want next! See here, young man; just take a look at those stores and you'll find by the labels they came from New York,—American goods, all of them. And these suit-cases contain nothing but personal effects, necessary for our comfort and convenience. There is nothing dutiable in the lot."

An argument followed, accompanied with an opening of suit-cases and a reference to regulations. The upshot was that the procession was permitted to proceed.

"More trouble getting started than it is to take a ship around Cape Horn," fussed the captain, as he superintended the loading of the express-wagon. "Don't put that box on top of that suit-case, you blank fool! Stand the cases under the seat."

In a minute more a fresh start had been made.

They drove northward through Honolulu's Oriental quarter. Some of the seamen rode in the express-wagon. Others walked behind it. Gradually the city thinned out. They were in the open country.

At a leisurely rate they rode between the rice-fields. They came to the ravine where they must turn aside into the little trail leading to the bungalow. They looked up the broad, volcanic slope. More than two miles away, they saw the little cottage, a white spot rising from the green of a tree-covered ridge.

Hack and wagon were dismissed. The seamen lifted the boxes of stores. In Indian file the party followed the trail, the captain himself in the lead. The seafarer, back from far voyagings, was climbing the hills to spend a few weeks in his island bungalow.

The captain now was dressed in a suit of white duck. He carried the light coat over one arm. With his right hand he occasionally waved his white sun-helmet as a fan.

While they were within the ravine, they could see nothing of the cottage. But when they had climbed to the ridge where it stood, they saw it only half a mile away. The afternoon sun was reflected brightly from its white front. And from the chimney there curled a wreath of smoke. "Someone has broken in," and the captain expressed his opinion of trespassers in terms which were more professional than polite.

"Here! Andrew, Axel," he called, "Hurry up with those boxes. We'll turn them out, as soon as we get there."

But when they came to the cottage, they saw no one outside. Yet the door stood open. The intruders must be within.

The captain crossed the little porch at a single stride, and burst into the room which we have described as fitted up like a ship's cabin.

"Have they turned this place into a jail?" he stormed.

Four men, all of them well-dressed and respectable in appearance, were tied hand and foot to as many chairs. Their hands and feet were not fastened together, but were bound to the legs and backs of the chairs. The face of each was partially covered with a red cotton handkerchief, such as a Japanese laborer wraps around his head, while at work in the cane-fields. The cloth covered the mouth of each of the men. They said nothing, but their eyes were very appealing.

The captain whipped out a pocket-knife and began to cut the cords. Two of his men were on his heels. He signed to them to help him.

Each prisoner, as soon as his hands were free, tore the handkerchief from his face, and began to pull a gag from his mouth—a gag consisting of a bunch of cotton-waste such as is used in the engine-room of a steamer. They hurried to the open air, where they coughed out bits of the cotton. Mrs. Coburn and her daughter, who had been peeping in at the doorway, drew back to let them pass. The lady's air was very disdainful.

"What's the meaning of this?" asked the captain.

The president undertook to be spokesman for the prisoners.

"We are the victims of a dastardly outrage, sir," he sputtered; "a dastardly outrage."

"How's that?"

"I shall be only too happy to explain in full, and to offer you my very sincere thanks for your assistance, after we have refreshed ourselves with a little drinking-water."

"All right," and the four men hurried to one of the rain-water tanks, from which they drew a bucketful of water.

"Come inside," said the captain, as soon as he saw that they were ready, "and I'll hear your explanation."

He ushered them to chairs. All took places around the square table. Above the table there was a skylight, a combination of glass and brass and polished mahogany, through which the light fell strongly on the white cloth. What with the marine skylight and the marine views on the walls and the ship's furniture, the setting was very nautical.

The president cleared his throat once more. The captain prepared to listen. His wife and daughter, who betrayed an equal interest, rested in deep wicker chairs which stood on the verandah just without the door.

The president sketched in brief outline the adventure of the night before; the departure of the party from the Cosmos Club for a week's shark-hunting and tuna-fishing in the lochs of Pearl harbor; the "hold-up" in the canyon which lay between Salt Lake crater and the hills; Crane's departure to return the limousine to its garage.

"The man at the bottom of this pernicious piece of work is known to one of us," the president explained, and he turned to Frank Atten. "Therefore we shall have no difficulty in apprehending the fellow; we'll have no trouble in handling him, for his methods appear to be altogether childish. Why, he left us last night without giving his helpers any directions as to the treatment we should receive. At first the Japanese wanted us to sleep in the open. Then they found that the house would not afford accommodation for their entire party. After quarreling among themselves as to who should occupy the rooms, they settled the matter by giving the rooms to us, while they pitched their camp behind the building."

"I suppose they placed a guard over you."

"Indeed they did."

"But you haven't explained what has become of them, and how it came about that we found you gagged and bound."

"I'm coming to that. They appeared to be very ill-provided with food. A little rice was all they had. But they allowed us to share it. We had a meager breakfast and a worse lunch. This afternoon we heard a great chattering among them. We went outside, to see what had happened. A deer had wandered almost into the camp. The men were handling their knives, all of them eager to start on a hunt which would supply them with fresh meat. Our manager understands the Japanese language. It appeared that all of them wanted to go on the hunt. Not one of them was willing to remain as a guard, and the upshot of

their argument was that they decided to tie us up, and tied up we were. You saw how well they had done their work."

"But what was their motive in bringing you here in the first place?"

"A gang of discharged laborers, bent on revenge."

"But you say they were led by a white man."

"He told us nothing as to his motives or intentions. We are as much in the dark concerning them as you are."

"Well, you are free now. I guess the best thing for you to do is to make your escape."

At that moment one of the seamen came to the door.

"There's a gang of Japs coming, zur."

Everyone hurried outside. Down the trail from the higher hills a number of Japanese were coming. On the shoulders of two of the men there rested a pole, from which hung the body of a deer.

The captain and his party had come to the rear of the bungalow. In a moment the Japanese caught sight of them. They broke into an excited chatter. Then they laid the deer on the ground. Flourishing their cane-knives, they came on.

"Look out, captain. They're dangerous." This from Deane.

"Oh, I'll take care of them," and Coburn dragged from his hip-pocket his inseparable companion—a snub-nosed Colt's revolver, of 45 caliber, loaded with dum-dum bullets.

Now the Japanese were within speaking distance.

"Put down those knives," the captain roared.

The Japanese hesitated. Their leader, Wanto, was not in sight, but one of these men could speak a little English. He came forward alone.

"What do you fellows mean?" Coburn inquired; "kidnapping people and bringing them to my bungalow?"

"But, boss—please, boss—these all four men, velly bad men. We work for them, we cut cane. They no pay. White men buy shares in sugar company, they no pay them. Those men go Californnee. All poor men—these fellow no pay them nothing."

"Don't pay any attention to him, captain," Atten volunteered. "It is true that we are the officers and manager of the X Sugar Company, but we have always met our just obligations."

"You say that you are the officers and manager of the X Sugar Company?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why, I remember when your company was organized, ten years ago. You fellows were peddling the stock around Honolulu, and you made some wonderful promises. The returns would be immense. Has your company paid a dividend yet?"

"We have been putting everything into development work."

"Same old story. And I was fool enough to buy ten shares of your stock. A thousand dollars of my good money gone. You fellows have been drawing liberal salaries and living like kings, while I and two hundred California shareholders never

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have received a cent. I shall inquire further into your case, before I let you go," and, muttering something about "rascally scoundrels," the master of the Agamemnon turned to his men,

"Boys, just tie these fellows up again."

XVII

A CHANGE OF BASE

A STORM of protest burst from the prisoners.
"You can't do that!"
"Don't do it, captain! We'll compromise."
"If you tie us up, you'll take the consequences."
"Oh, I'll stand the consequences," the captain retorted. "You can't bluff me. Here, Andrew, Axel!"

The grinning Norwegians had heard him, and were hurrying to the spot. They snatched up the cords from where they lay on the verandah, and started to throw them around the limbs of the prisoners. But, for a moment Atten was neglected. There was the crash of an overturned chair as he improved the opportunity by making a dash for the trail.

He did not run very far. There was a yell from the Japanese, and then Atten was submerged beneath half-a-dozen pugnacious orientals. Within five minutes he and his associates were as captain Coburn had found them.

The captain still stood within the bungalow, where he had supervised the tying-up, when he heard his daughter calling,

"Oh, father! Come out! Here comes a flying-machine."

Coburn came out to the verandah. A biplane was approaching. Straight up the trail it came. And they saw that something hung below the planes.

The captain lifted his marine glass.

"There's a man hanging from that machine."

"A man!"

"I guess they mean to land him."

At that moment the biplane dipped until the trees hid it from sight. It re-appeared a minute later, skimming down into one of the ravines. They saw that the man no longer hung beneath it.

"They landed him," the captain commented.

Crane hastened up the narrow trail, the trade-wind blowing freshly in his face, and as he went he looked ahead with almost feverish interest, wondering whether all was well at the bungalow. He realized his limitations, and fretted for fear some mistake of his should spoil the plan. He was no Isaac Newton, nor was he a dime-novel detective, whose unerring brain might plot against a thousand enemies with absolute certainty of success.

"If ever a fellow was favored by fortune," he thought, "I have been favored to-day. I only hope my luck continues."

Then he decided that his luck had changed, for, as he came in full view of the bungalow, he saw captain Coburn, with his wife and daughter. Something had happened to change the situation.

Coburn greeted him.

"Well, young man, that was an original idea of yours for getting here."

It occurred to Crane that the idea had not been his, but he didn't try to debate the point.

"Are you the fellow who is responsible for this business?" Coburn inquired; "trespassing on my property and turning it into a jail."

"I'm the guilty party."

"Well, if the case were anything else than what it is, you'd have landed yourself in jail. But I've been talking with your prisoners, and I guess that you and I have a common ground of complaint against them. I was going to let them go, but I tied them up again. Come in, and we'll discuss this matter."

Crane entered, surprised to see the four men bound so securely to chairs. They were not gagged, but they preserved a sulky silence.

For a moment Coburn was busy, grouping the party.

"Put those men there," and he motioned the seamen to move the sugar-planters to one side.

"Sit down here," and he waved Crane to a place at the center-table.

Then he tossed his white sun-helmet on the damask cloth, and helped himself to a chair.

"Now, sir, I'll hear from you."

Crane and the captain faced each other across the table. On one side of the room sat the row of sugar-planters, dressed in white duck and tied in their chairs. Behind them, with their backs to the wall, stood the seamen, wearing their blue woolen shirts and belted trousers. On the opposite

side of the room Mrs. Coburn and her daughter rested on a wicker sofa. Overhead the Pacific trade-wind was droning steadily across the shingled roof.

Obviously there was nothing for Crane to do but to be frank. He went back to the beginning and explained the situation as he had explained it to the lieutenant on the day of his arrival in Honolulu.

"If anything is to be done with these fellows," he concluded, "it can be done only by applying pressure to them. That's why I brought them here."

Coburn considered the case.

"Well, young man," he began, "I rather like your methods. They're something like my own. You're a man who goes after results, and results are what count. I'm inclined to let you go ahead with your plans, whatever they may be. But you can't use my bungalow. My family and I require that."

"We might camp out behind the place, now that we are here. I see the Japanese have pitched their camp there."

This was emphasized by a puff of wind, which brought the aroma of roasting venison and the sound of a crackling camp-fire.

The captain shook his head.

"If you stay here, it will be impossible to keep the matter quiet," he objected.

"You mean that the seamen will spread a report."

"No, sir! The seamen! They know nothing but what I want them to know, and they do

nothing but what I tell them to do. But we have made arrangements to have supplies sent us daily. Many people may visit this place."

Obviously, the place would not do.

"We might clear a spot farther up the trail, and pitch our camp there," Crane ventured.

"Well, talk it over with your helpers, not with me," Coburn answered. "The less I and my people know about your plans, the safer it will be for you."

The advice sounded good. The prisoners were lifted in their chairs and carried within the Japanese cabin. They had been interested listeners to the discussion. Now the president broke his silence.

"If you will tell us what you want, we might be able to settle it here and now."

"No doubt you would be quite willing to sign any papers we might present," answered Crane; "but you would repudiate those obligations as soon as you were at liberty. No, no. To carry out my plans will require time."

"In that case, why not adjourn to my home in Manoa valley? There we could enjoy comfortable quarters, and settle the affair at our leisure."

Crane considered the suggestion.

"The old fellow's idea is a good one," he thought, "provided it is carried out according to my notions." In imagination, he saw himself luxuriating in the president's home, "reposing on downy beds of ease."

"If you'll send an order, dismissing your servants for a week, so that there will be nothing to prevent

my taking entire charge of the premises,—. But, wait; how about your wife and family?"

"My wife and family are on a visit to the mainland, and will not return for another month or more."

But Crane was suspicious. Captain Coburn had returned unexpectedly. Might not the same thing happen in the case of the president's family? But "Foxy Grandpa" was able to produce documentary evidence to prove that what he said was true. A recent letter from his wife settled the point.

Under Crane's direction, a letter, couched in the most absolute terms, was drawn up and addressed to the steward in charge of the Manoa valley mansion. He was to "take the servants to Palama for a week's vacation, or until ordered to return." He was to remove the dogs from the premises, and was to lock up everything. The keys were to be sent to the president by the messenger.

Wanto himself carried the message. He was given strict injunctions to see that all of its provisions were obeyed. He realized their importance too well for any doubt to arise as to his zealously.

The sun had set before Wanto started. Meanwhile, captain Coburn and his party had established themselves in the bungalow. Crane and his prisoners had joined the Japanese in their camp. They lay down to snatch a few hour's sleep before the return of Wanto.

He came at midnight, bringing a positive assurance that the Manoa valley home had been

vacated. He had seen the servants established in Palama. He brought the bunch of keys.

Now Crane must descend the hill, for it was his intention to go himself to the president's home and return with the president's limousine, driving it to the foot of the trail. This was the machine whose gray hood, gray body and gray tires, had impressed lieutenant Sherrill as a symphony in gray. Crane would use it to convey the prisoners to Manoa valley.

They were roused. They had been lying on the ground, where they had fallen into a none-too-refreshing sleep, which had not improved their tempers. In sulky tones they asked "what was wanted?"

"We want you to come down the hill, to the highway," Crane explained.

"What then?"

"I shall bring a machine and take you to Honolulu."

"What will you do with us there?" the manager wanted to know.

"You'll find out."

"He means that he will take us to my home in Manoa valley," the president prompted, and then he added, addressing Crane. "But you returned the machine to the garage. Do you want Mr. Deane to write another note, asking the manager of the garage to let you have it?"

"That is quite unnecessary. I shall use your machine."

"Oh!! You help yourself to anything you want."

"Quite so. You have been making a specialty of that sort of thing, so far. Now it's my turn."

Whereupon the prisoners permitted themselves to be led toward the trail. The path lay plain before the party. The night was a warm Hawaiian night. The sky was spangled with great tropical stars. No showers came drifting from the higher hills. The prisoners were led rapidly down the hill.

They came to the foot of the trail. There they halted, and there four of the Japanese remained to guard them. The rest of the Japanese accompanied Crane on his way to Manoa valley.

Two hours of rapid walking brought them to the place. Standing before the wall of coral rock, Wanto fitted a key to the wrought-iron gate. He swung it open without delay, and the party penetrated behind the shade of the triple hedge of cocoa-palms. They ascended the winding avenue which led to the verandah.

Skirting the dark outlines of the mansion, Wanto led the way to the garage. Again he had made careful note of the key. In a moment he had the door open. There stood the luxurious limousine, with its upholstery of satin and velvet. The glare of Crane's electric torch flashed on its gray body.

Cautiously they drew it out into the yard. Crane satisfied himself that the fuel-tank was full. Then he directed the Japanese to take up their quarters in the garage. They had brought their blankets, although their cabin had been left where they had pitched it behind the bungalow.

He started the machine, and turned it into the

avenue of palms. The heavy machine rolled around the curves to where the great iron gate afforded exit. As it went, the glare of the head-lamps, glancing capriciously as the car took the curves, showed the tall white columns of palms reaching up to a curved tangle of fronds. Crane had almost reached the gate, when he shut off the power and applied the brakes abruptly. The light showed a man standing in the middle of the way.

One of the Japanese had accompanied Crane, to close the gate. They both jumped from the car and hurried forward to question the man, who stood in the full glare of the head-lamps.

He was a poor Hawaiian. The Hawaiians are an improvident race, and this man was a living exemplification of improvidence. His coat was full of holes. So were his shoes. His battered straw hat no longer had a crown.

The Japanese grasped him by one arm, while asking,

"Wha' you want?"

"Poi! Poi!" and the man pointed to his mouth.

"He say him hungry," explained the Japanese.

"But why does he come here?" asked Crane.

"Why you fellow come here?" asked the Japanese. "This place no soup-kitchen."

"Want poi. No can sleep."

Crane reflected that a hungry man, too hungry to sleep, is no respecter of times and places. Crane's nervousness disappeared. This was nothing but a native beggar.

But on second thought, why should the fellow be begging? There was plenty of work in the

cane-fields for such as he. Apparently the Japanese thought so, too.

"Why you no go-to-work?" he asked. "Why you no go sugar plantation, dig ditch, hoe cane?"

The beggar tried to explain.

"I work for this man," he said, and he pointed up the avenue. Crane judged that he referred to the president of the X Sugar Company. "I work for this man. One day, I drink too much gin. Manager fire me. Now, I no can get steady job. Work, one, two day—no more."

"I wonder if they put him on the black-list?"

"Yes, Yes; black-list. Tell everybody me no good. Some day I take cane-knife, kill this fellow, if I no can get poi. This man and his friends, mean fellows. His friend eat at hotel. He eat poi—eat beefsteak. Me look in window. He laugh. One man give me quarter dollar. Then I eat poi."

The above statement did not enlighten Crane very much, but he grasped the idea that the president and his friends had amused themselves at the beggar's expense, and that they were about as popular with the beggar as they were with him.

"A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind." Crane decided that he must do something for the man. He sent the Japanese to the garage for some bananas. While he waited, he pressed five dollars into the Hawaiian's hand.

The poor fellow was profuse in his thanks. Now the bananas came—half a dozen big Brazilians. He hardly waited to peel them, in his wolfish eagerness. The suddenness with which they disappeared testified to his hunger.

While Crane watched the beggar eat, it occurred to him that the man might get employment as a stevedore. He took out his note-book and hurriedly wrote a line to the master of the Agamemnon.

Captain Coburn; Dear Sir:

Here is another victim of the methods of the X Sugar Company, a poor fellow who cannot get work. Can't you arrange that he be employed in unloading the Agamemnon? He looks to be sufficiently able-bodied.

Yours, Kenneth Crane.

Crane tore the leaf from his note-book and gave it to the man, with an explanation that it might bring him work if presented to the captain. The Japanese explained where the captain might be found. Once more the man was profuse in thanks. Then they ushered him without the grounds. Crane returned to the driver's seat of the limousine, and drove the car into the highway. Behind him he heard the wrought-iron gate clang shut.

He was alone, in the small hours of the night, whirling through the tree-shaded avenues of Honolulu. As he went, he thought how one vicissitude was piling upon another! How suddenly, from time to time, he had been compelled to change his plans! As he guided the car beneath the long, dark lines of algeroba trees, he wondered whether he should find the prisoners waiting for him when he returned to the trail. The situation had changed its complexion so frequently and so suddenly, that it would not have amazed him had he found them gone.

But they were there. One of the guards stood, a dark shadowy figure, on the highway, to warn Crane that he had reached the trail. Other dark and shadowy figures approached. The car swung around. The manager and officers of the X Sugar Company were escorted to places within the limousine.

With nine passengers, quarters were cramped. However, there was no time to argue over such points. Time was flying. Crane knew his way now, and he let the car out for the return journey. But at no time did he unmuffle the exhaust. Swiftly and silently, like a gray shadow, the great gray limousine slid along the road.

Before they had reached Manoa the sky was commencing to brighten overhead. Dawn—cool, quiet, shadowless—was descending from the up-reaching mountain-tops. The first glimmer of sunlight had come to the hills when the machine swung into the gigantic alcove made by the valley, stopped for an instant before the wrought-iron gates, and then, as they were flung open, ascended the winding avenue of palms. The car whirled through the grounds and stopped before the garage.

The president was nodding. His night's rest had consisted of a very few hour's sleep, snatched while lying on the ground. The experience was telling on him.

He expected to be taken to his bed-room, but this formed no part of Crane's plan. The prisoners were herded into the garage. They asked for cots, and the president assured Crane that the house

contained a supply, which he could point out on a moment's notice.

He was permitted to do so. The cots were brought out and set up in the garage. There were so many that Crane felt moved to inquire whether the president intended to furnish a field-hospital. It appeared, however, that they belonged to an outing-club, of which the president's son and heir was a member.

The cots pleased the Japanese. There were enough for all. The garage was roomy, and it hummed with the noise of installing the beds. The Japanese, who had had less sleep than their prisoners, flung themselves down and prepared to enjoy their rest. Placing themselves before doors and windows, so that the prisoners could not attempt an escape without arousing someone, they were asleep in a minute.

Meanwhile, Crane had entered the mansion, For the time-being, it was his and he would enjoy it. Nor did he feel himself to be a trespasser. Whence had come the money which had built that home, and had made possible the delightful grounds which surrounded it? Did not all of this luxury represent dividends which had been filched from the stockholders? Well, the stockholders were about to enter into the possession of what belonged to them. Better days were dawning. As Crane entered the room reserved for the president's son and heir, and prepared to make up his night's sleep, a delicious thrill of accomplishment stirred him.

He felt as happy as the Prodigal Son exchanging

a menu of corn-husks for a menu of veal. But the excitement and vicissitudes of the day and night had "gotten on his nerves." Throngs of hurrying pictures flitted before his mental vision. All the experiences of the past twenty-four hours kept repeating themselves in his mind.

How he had deluded Carding, luring him to the windward side of the island, there to lose him! But had he lost him? Was Carding still searching windward Oahu for Crane? If so, all was well. If not, who could tell what mischief that troublesome young man might accomplish? Yes, Carding was the one fly in the ointment.

But that idea was eclipsed by thoughts of the success he had had in handling the prisoners. It was true he had grazed disaster, but the result had transpired so that he felt himself stronger than ever. His captives were completely at his mercy, and in a place which, shielded behind its triple hedge of cocoa-palms, was wonderfully secluded. Here he would have every opportunity to tame them, until there would be no doubt of their keeping any agreement into which they might enter.

Gradually all ideas blurred together in Crane's mind. He was sleeping soundly, while at the windows the light of the tropical day beat against the thick shades and heavy curtains.

XVIII

THE HOME OF THE SUGAR PLANTER

WHEN Crane awoke it was afternoon. Six hours of sleep had refreshed him wonderfully. He sprang from his bed and hurried to raise the shades which covered the deep dormer windows.

The windows faced the garage. He saw the Japanese bustling in and out of its door. They had raided the president's pantry and were busy with preparations for a late breakfast. Although only laborers, one or two of them were proficient cooks. The fragrance of an appetising meal rose to Crane's window. He bathed, dressed and hurried to the verandah, where the table had been set.

An orange tree, spangled with golden fruit, grew just outside the railing. As Crane took his seat, he reached out and plucked one of the great golden globes. He was eating the fruit while he discussed the situation with Wanto.

It appeared that the prisoners had given no trouble. Wanto was eager to get Crane's directions with regard to them. To Wanto life meant work, and work meant carrying out the orders of someone above him.

"Have you fed them yet?" Crane inquired.

"No, no. They wait, while we eat."

"Well, feed them as soon as we have finished.

And, while they're eating, I'll take a look over this place. You know, I've never seen it before. I'll find out what sort of a hotel we have."

Crane finished his breakfast and saw the Japanese start towards the garage. Then he turned to explore the Manoa valley mansion.

Ignorant of the "plan" of the house, he passed through a short vestibule which lay just within the main entrance. At the farther end of the vestibule he came to a great carved door of koa wood. As soon as he passed it, he found himself in a square central space, around which the house had been built. But this central court, instead of being open to the sky, was roofed with colored glass and furnished as a reception-hall.

The furnishings fairly made him gasp. His eyes roved curiously over the apartment.

He saw a great square room, distinguished by the utmost possible richness of decoration. Through a dome of rose-tinted glass the light fell on a floor that was a riot of sumptuous rugs, with huge white pelts of the polar bear, deep and fluffy; tawny tiger skins from India and leopard skins from Africa. Each lifted a round head and opened a scarlet mouth with a snarling display of ivory fangs.

Upon the rugs stood furniture of oriental ebony—high-backed sofas and chairs carved in intricate dragon patterns. The dark, heavy table was half covered with a bright cloth, in the center of which stood a tall Japanese vase crowned with a great cluster of chrysanthemums, white and lemon-yellow.

At the end of the apartment a wide flight of stairs, carpeted with crimson, led to a gallery supported on arches of some dark wood. Between the arches there stood bronze statues.

The remaining sides of the room, above a few feet of dark panelling, were decorated with paintings which impressed Crane as very novel. Painted directly upon the plaster of the walls were sea-scapes—scenes on the coast of China. The pictures were outlandish with high-sterned junks and square-ended boats, with high square sails, that went drifting lazily over oily bays, between steep rocky islets crowned with white pagodas. Great watery mountain-ranges of pale pink clouds billowed above dim horizons.

Figuratively, Crane's eye drank in everything,—the rose-tinted dome, the riot of rugs, the oriental furniture, the lofty gallery with its crimson staircase, the carved panelling, and the paintings on the walls. The wealth of splendid and tasteful decoration seemed to him like the vision of a dream.

"So this is the home of a sugar-planter!" he thought. "This is the style in which he lives! Look at the luxury! Here he has been living in a lovely home, surrounded by grounds which are a blend of bliss and blossoms, while the majority of the California stockholders must look twice at a dollar before they spend it."

Nowhere in that room had expense been spared, and nowhere could there be found any evidence of a lack of taste.

From that apartment Crane entered another,

which appeared to be the president's private study. There were books in plenty. A globe stood in one corner. A great carved writing-table, resting on a sumptuous Persian rug, occupied the center of the floor. The room impressed Crane as being the very place in which to arraign the prisoners. He summoned Wanto.

"Bring them in, Wanto."

They were brought. They were not bound in any way, but were guarded by the full force of Japanese. The Orientals remained in the background, guarding all exits. Each of them puffed a cigarette. In fact, a Japanese without a cigarette would seem as incongruous as a tropical island without a palm tree, or Honolulu without a tourist.

The prisoners were provided with seats by the side of the table.

Crane presided as master of ceremonies. He sank in a deep arm-chair which had been the president's favorite. Behind it stood a revolving bookcase, on top of which there rested a specimen of Japanese art,—a bronze statuette of a Manchurian tiger.

For a moment Crane sat there, looking across the table, eyeing the men before him. Pride stirred within him. Only a few days before he had landed, unnoticed on the shores of Hawaii. To-day—he was absolute master of the lives and fortunes of four proud and prominent citizens, men who had despised him.

How to humiliate them most? He called on Wanto.

Coming forward to the side of Crane's chair,

Wanto took the floor. He gloried in the opportunity.

"So, you are the men who would defraud us of all payment," he began, addressing the prisoners. "You are the men who drove us from your presence with dogs! You roared with laughter when you saw your dogs pursue us to the gate. You seemed to think that we were helpless. Fools! Do you think that brave men can be driven to the last extremity and never lift a hand in their own defense? You paltry fools! Four men, unarmed, and with no power save such as the law gives them. You had not even the sense to use that.

"You swelled and strutted. You seemed to think that you were gods, gifted with supernatural powers which made it impossible for us to reach you. And yet, the second attempt we made to take you, we took you as though you were a bunch of rabbits. It would have cost us ten times the effort to capture your wolf-hounds. They might have involved us in some danger. But you! poor paltry fools! white rabbits!" and Wanto paused for breath.

The captives listened sourly to this burst of Japanese eloquence. Then the manager snarled,

"Tell us what you want and get it over."

"You surely are poor paltry fools, as he says," said Crane, "if you adopt such a tone as that, in your present predicament."

The president spoke.

"It's easy enough for you to revile us," he said. "Here you hold us prisoners. If we answer you, you will silence us with wads of cotton waste,

thrust into our mouths. But if we could speak freely, we might put another complexion on the case."

"Humph! Perhaps you would use the old argument, that you have been putting all of the proceeds into development work. That's stale."

Atten spoke up, but in a more conciliatory tone.

"You seem to have overlooked, sir, one of your helpers' statements. He says that we 'have no power save such as the law gives us.' But isn't that power considerable? It is true that you hold us, just at present. But, will the law take no cognizance of your crime? Will no inquiry be made? May you not involve yourself in a desperate situation, if you continue this course?"

"And you seem to have overlooked," answered Crane, "that you are dealing with men whom you have driven desperate. Why, if I gave the word, these men would finish you as quickly as your wolf-hounds would finish them. The only reason they don't harm you is because I have persuaded them that we may be able to come to an understanding and a settlement which will be much more advantageous than your death."

The expressions on the faces of the Japanese bore out this statement. Crane saw the prisoners turn pale.

"Don't ask me to sympathize with you," the Californian continued. "You got yourselves into your present predicament. But before we tell you our demands, we propose to tell you a few things about yourselves and your methods it will be good for you to hear. The world is getting too

enlightened to tolerate such methods as yours. Men have come to know that real prosperity rests on the general prosperity of all, not on the power of one man to rob another. The methods of the robber-barons of the Middle Ages have been left behind us with the Middle Ages. You tried to revive them."

"And yet, what we did is being done all the time."

"To some extent, yes. But not on such a wholesale plan as the one you followed. Men can always be exploited to some extent. But when you carry such methods too far, they are driven to rebellion. Then, look out. What brought this trouble upon you, was your own grasping short-sightedness, your desire to exploit your fellow-men, rather than to serve and to create. And yet all the while, it was only in so far as you served and created, for the benefit of the rest of the world, that you prospered or could prosper."

"I wish you would make that clear."

"Certainly, I will. Does the X plantation produce anything?"

"Yes; sugar."

"And of what use is that sugar?"

"It is a food."

"Then you have been producing sugar to feed mankind. Now, if that isn't creating and serving, I'd like to know what is?"

"Then you admit that our ambition has been to create and to serve."

"No, I don't. You never thought of that side of the case. You regarded the plantation only as a

revenue-producer. The rest of the world could starve and rot for all you cared. And yet, all the while, you only existed because the rest of the world was able to buy your sugar.

"You produced sugar; the gold-mines of California produced gold. You exported your sugar to California. You exchanged your sugar for its gold. You were living under a co-operative system. You owed your every cent to it. And yet the very thought of co-operation grated on your nerves.

"Had it been in your power to close the gold-mines of California, you would have given the word in an instant. Had it been in your power to destroy the grain-fields of California, you would have done so, for such is your amiable disposition. And by so doing you would have destroyed the purchasing power of the very people to whom you wished to sell. In your silly shortsightedness you were hating the very system which made your prosperity possible."

Crane considered for a moment and then went on,

"But if I talked till doomsday I doubt whether I could change your mental attitudes. I'm here to dictate terms. If you want to save your necks, you'll agree to those terms. Otherwise, I'll let you argue the case with the Japanese."

The prisoners were paying the best of attention. They looked eagerly toward Crane. But were they looking at him? Or was their attention centered on something they saw behind him? The Californian stopped and cast a glance backward

over his shoulder. He saw only a row of Japanese on the verandah.

Crane turned again to his prisoners and proceeded to dictate his terms.

"Well, we'll let by-gones be by-gones," he began.

"How magnanimous!" was the president's thought.

"Your homes and personal property will be left you," Crane continued. "There will be no danger of your suffering from poverty. But your incomes from the X plantation must be cut off. You must sign over every share you own. Those shares will be divided, pro rata, among the minority stockholders."

Crane expected an outburst of expostulation from the prisoners. None came.

"And we will hold you," he concluded, "until the transfer has been put through the banks in due and legal form, and we are satisfied that you will abide by it. Do you agree?"

"Certainly we agree. You are master of the situation."

"Then all that remains for to-day, is to make out and sign the papers."

But Crane heard an angry growl from the Japanese behind him. This easy victory would not satisfy them. They must have an opportunity to give the prisoners an object-lesson. Atten afforded the opportunity.

"I suppose you don't call this stealing?" he said.

"No sir, I do not. To recover what rightfully belongs to me, is not stealing. Mr. Atten, you seem to be too 'fresh.' Little boys should be

seen and not heard. I guess we'll have to impress that on your seat of consciousness. Wanto, bring a barrel and teach this fellow manners."

In an instant, a barrel had been brought. Four Japanese hurled themselves on Atten. They threw him over the barrel and held him there, while two others plied the bamboos. The rest of the Japanese shouted with laughter. The attorney howled with pain and rage. Whack! Whack! Whack! Not until all had taken a turn at wielding the bamboo, did they release him.

The object-lesson was effective. The prisoners lost all desire to criticize Crane and his methods. He settled himself at the table to make out the papers.

It was a long and toilsome process, for he had planned a set of very binding agreements. I warrant you he did not forget any technicality. The hours flew by. Meanwhile, half of the Japanese were dismissed to the kitchen, where they set about the preparation of dinner.

At last the papers were ready and were passed across the table to be signed by the president and his associates. While the signatures were being affixed, Crane leaned back and stretched his feet and flexed the muscles of his forearm, for he was weary with writing.

Directly behind him was a wide arched window, its halves swinging sideways on hinges out over the verandah. It had been thrown open, and in the opening the Japanese were sitting, smoking endless cigarettes and chattering in low tones. Though the time was near sunset, the sky was very

bright. The light fell strongly over Crane's shoulder.

As he sat there, he let his gaze ramble around the luxurious room. The decorations were distinctly Oriental, with such a profusion of tall porcelain jars and Japanese armor, of sleepy Buddhas and ebony furniture, of screens and bronzes and ivory carvings, it seemed as if an art shop of Tokio had been transported to Honolulu. Crane's eye was caught and held by a superb Japanese screen with panels of embroidered silk. Across its panels ran a picture of a gigantic eagle hovering above a wind-whipped sea and a rocky coast. White-capped waves were roaring toward the shore, and above the waves there flew white sea-birds. In the very foreground a low ragged rock rose from the water and to its summit the eagle clung. One could almost feel his talons gripping the rock, as with wings outspread and plumage ruffled and head bent and yellow beak thrust down, he peered into the sea beating and surging below him. All the interest centered on the giant bird.

The design expressed action, action to the Nth power, for the great eagle was vibrant with life, aroused, powerful and predatory. The technique was perfect. As a picture, that piece of embroidery far surpassed the average oil-painting. And the luster of the silk lent it a tone which no oil-painting can ever possess.

Crane glanced from the picture to its owner—the president.

"He certainly has taste," Crane decided; "taste

which he has gratified at our expense. Hereafter, he'll gratify it at his own.

The president had finished signing the papers and had passed them on. Now he was fanning himself with his handkerchief, though the air did not seem to be particularly warm for a day in the tropics.

Crane watched him for a moment before he asked,

"Old man, can't you amuse yourself in any way, except by playing with your handkerchief?"

"I think I might. I could slap your face, for instance," and the president flicked the end sharply on Crane's cheek.

For a moment the Californian was too surprised to speak. Then he sprang to his feet.

"I'll skin you alive," he shouted.

"Oh, I don't think so," and at the same moment Crane was conscious of a movement behind him. Part of the light from the window had been cut off. A shadow fell on the papers before him. As the papers darkened, the faces of the men across the table lit with a gleam of triumph. And then bedlam broke loose.

He saw the manager and the president rise and hurl themselves upon him. Behind him he heard the thud of bodies, the thrashing of heavy boots, the clicking of handcuffs, accompanied by a medley of grunts, snarls and shouts. He was dimly conscious of Atten overthrowing Wanto. Wanto had snatched the bronze statuette from the bookcase and was wielding it in his own defense.

Then the atmosphere cleared, and Crane found himself and his helpers, helpless on the floor, bound hand and foot, while over them exulted John Carding and a crew of jabbering, yellow-faced Koreans.

But, if the Japanese were tied, their mouths were at liberty. With all their lungs, they were shouting for help, and help was coming. The rest of the party were galloping along the verandah. The planks were thundering to the beating of their heavy boots. The Koreans turned to meet them. Atten seemed to think that once more he was playing college football. At the head of Carding's Koreans, he threw himself upon the re-inforcements, sweeping two of them to the floor. In another minute, all of them had been overpowered, handcuffed and bound.

Crane had said that there were to be four villains in the cast. He had forgotten the fifth—John Carding.

When a man feels his condition to be helpless and hopeless, nearly as bad as it can be, he takes it rather coolly. As Crane lay stretched on the floor, and listened to the talk which was going on above him, he felt very much as though he were an outsider, as though the situation concerned him not at all.

John Carding appeared to be the hero of the hour. They were congratulating him on the rescue, and were asking him how he had planned it.

"I saw your first signal beneath the palm-trees," the president explained, "and I knew then

that help was coming. In fact, I never felt any concern after that time." Then he broke off to exclaim "Oh, my poor tiger!" The bronze statuette lay on the floor, minus two legs and a tail. It appeared to have been the chief sufferer in the fight.

"I knew this fellow, Crane, was up to some mischief," said Carding. "Yesterday, I tracked him to the other side of the island. He dodged back to Honolulu, and that told me that he meant some trick. But I never imagined he would carry it this far.

"I learned at the Cosmos Club, to-day, that you had started for Pearl City. I telephoned there, and they told me that you had not arrived. Then I started out to hunt for you at your homes. As soon as I got here, and climbed the wall, and caught a glimpse of the Japanese, I saw what had happened. So I hurried to the plantation, and got together a bunch of twenty Koreans. You know how a Korean hates a Jap. I hurried here, and you know the rest."

While they had been talking, the sun had set. Now the short tropical twilight was fading. Already it was dark beneath the trees.

"What shall we do with these things?" and Carding kicked a prostrate Jap.

"Put them in the garage, with a guard of Koreans, for the night," answered the president. "We'll have our suppers and a good night's rest, and deal with them to-morrow."

Meanwhile the manager was bestowing sundry

kicks and thumps upon the unhappy Wanto, snarling as he did so,

"I'll show you how much of a white rabbit I am, before I'm through with you. You'll decide that a wolf-hound is gentle in comparison."

"How about this fellow?" and Carding indicated Crane.

The manager transferred his attentions to the Californian.

"How comes it he isn't handcuffed?" he inquired.

"We had only fifteen pairs."

"Well, put a couple of extra turns of rope around him."

"And then throw him under the trees," the president added. "We'll keep him apart from his helpers."

These directions were carried out. They took a final look at Crane as he lay beneath the palms.

"So, you poor, paltry, pitiful, little fool, you imagined you could cope with us! So, this is where all your plans and plots have brought you! Here you lie, trussed like a fowl for the roasting. Well, I hope you pass a pleasant night," and with a good-night kick they left him.

Above him the tall trunks swayed; their plummy foliage was waving in the slow night wind. The sky was half covered with clouds. Up in the hills it was raining, and the edge of the shower had drifted down into the valley. Now the rain was pattering on the palm trees, and dripping on the ground where Crane was lying. Little pools and ponds began to form.

His body and limbs were cramped by the cords; his blood could circulate but slowly. In spite of the tropical climate, a chill from the wind and rain was penetrating to his bones. And close at hand, within the mansion, were his most vindictive enemies, made rancorous by the treatment they had received during the last two days, and backed by Carding and his band of Koreans.

XIX

AN ESCAPE

THERE is a knack by which a man may free himself from any ordinary rope-tying, and Crane had learned the knack. Next morning he was missing.

The news was brought to the president and his party while they were at the breakfast-table. The Koreans also brought the cords with which Crane had been bound, and with them a leaf torn from a note-book. Two words were scribbled on the paper,—“Good bye.”

This message was handed through the railing of the verandah, for breakfast was being served in the open air. The president took the paper with the tips of his fingers, while he lifted a pair of platinum-rimmed eye-glasses from his vest-pocket. He caught the words at a glance, and passed the paper to Atten.

“Facetious, isn’t he?” commented the president.

“You seem to take it very coolly,” answered Atten. He himself was fairly boiling with rage, and he had reason. In a standing position, he was eating his breakfast from a side-board.

“Oh, we’ll get him. Did you ever hear of an escaped criminal who managed to elude capture in this island?”

“No; they get them in no time.”

"Precisely; and it is because the city is on an island, and a small island at that. He can't escape us, and you know it, if you'll stop to think."

"Then I move that we resolve ourselves into a committee of the whole, and decide how to conduct the hunt," said Frank Atten.

"Good!" and the president requested, "Gentlemen, I'd like to get your opinions as to where he is; the most likely direction in which to look for him, I mean?"

There were as many opinions as there were men present.

"Why, he and captain Coburn are a congenial pair. I'll bet he's at the bungalow."

"Coburn isn't his only friend. He may have applied to Sherrill to conceal him."

"I don't know. He's been posing as a tourist. There was an inter-island steamer scheduled to leave for Hilo last night. He may have gone there."

The manager thought Crane "might be lying low on some plantation. Better call up all the plantations and ask whether a stranger, answering Crane's description had arrived."

The president gave courteous attention to all of these suggestions, but there was a twinkle in his eye. Then he asked,

"Now tell me the last place where he's likely to be."

"Why, that's easy; at his hotel."

Everyone endorsed this opinion. It was unanimous.

"Precisely. Now, Mr. Crane appears to be a fairly astute young man. He has asked himself

the question, Where will they least expect to find me? He has answered that question as you answered it, and has gone direct to his hotel. The chances are ten to one he is there right now."

"Well, that's easily settled," and Carding went to the telephone.

"Hello," he called. "I want to inquire whether one of your guests is in the hotel now; a Mr. Kenneth Crane."

"Yes, he's here. At least, I saw him go into the dining-room. Shall I send for him?"

"Oh, never mind. I'll come down to the hotel. I can't settle this business over the telephone," and he turned to the president.

"You're right. You win. He's there."

The president's manner became philosophical as he answered,

"Now, that illustrates the character of the man. He is astute up to a certain point, but his astuteness never carries him quite far enough. If the distance from wharf to boat is ten feet, he jumps nine of those feet very well, but he lands in the water."

"Well, we know now where he is," said Deane. "I suppose the next thing to do is to call up the police."

"And have the whole of this affair aired in court?" asked the president, and he turned to Atten. "Frank, do you want to see the papers printing cartoons, showing you over a barrel."

The attorney was positive that he did not want to see the papers printing cartoons, showing him over a barrel.

"Of course you don't," the president continued. "That fellow made monkeys of us yesterday, and there's at least one paper would enjoy airing our misadventures. We're not too popular in Honolulu. I move that we settle this matter ourselves."

Atten had his doubts, now.

"In other words, you want us to take the law into our own hands," he said. "That might lead to serious complications."

"Complications with what,—or with whom?"

"Why, with the courts. Courts are jealous of their prerogatives."

"So they are, but they'll think twice before they interfere with us."

"I don't know. A minute ago you admitted that we are not too popular in Honolulu."

"Very true. But it would set a dangerous legal precedent if the directors of a big sugar company were harried."

This was true. The Hawaiian Islands are essentially an agricultural community. All the interests of the territory are bound up in the prosperity of the plantations. No district attorney would want to make trouble for the officers of a large estate, unless the case was a very clear one.

This thought ran through Atten's mind, as he answered,

"Oh, the courts would be bound to give us the benefit of any doubt. The question is, just how far can we go?"

"I think we can go as far as we please. If we had taken the initiative, the case would be altogether different. But our opponents have taken

the initiative. It is as though you defended yourself against a man who attacked you, Mr. Atten. Suppose you kill him in self-defense, is that murder?"

"Of course not."

"And haven't these parties attacked us. What they did was a clear case of kidnapping".

"It was a clear case, but not an aggravated case."

"Nevertheless, it put them clearly in the wrong. How can Crane and his helpers appeal to a court for protection, after they themselves have taken the law into their own hands. As well might a band of thieves appeal to a court for protection against the clubs of the police. They have outlawed themselves."

The manager struck the breakfast-table an emphatic blow with his fist as he endorsed the president's opinion. "Crane and his helpers have outlawed themselves."

In any other circumstances Atten would have insisted on debating the point, for he was a little jealous of his standing as the corporation's attorney. To be beaten by the president in a legal argument, he felt to be humiliating. But when a fresh twinge reminded him of his experience the day before, he promptly bottled up his legal doubts and joined the majority in their campaign of "expedient ruthlessness."

"Our president is always right," he said. "Crane is an outlaw, and we'll treat him as such. .But, just at present he isn't available."

"Oh, we'll get him," answered the manager. "But the Japanese are 'available,' as you put it.

Let's arm the Koreans with clubs and try the effect of a little corporeal punishment on them. Hammer the Japs to a jelly."

His manner showed that he was perfectly serious in his proposal. After a man has spent years in the exercise of arbitrary authority over gangs of oriental laborers, he may grow to regard his men with less consideration than he would a herd of work-animals. Or he may develop an honest interest in their welfare. The manager of the X plantation belonged to the former class. But his suggestion harmonized with the spirit of the meeting, for the spirit of the meeting was distinctly vindictive—although Atten didn't want to see the men murdered.

"Your methods are too strenuous," he objected. You know how a Korean loves a Jap. Before the Koreans were through, the Japs would be ready for the coroner. We'll keep those fellows and play with them as cats play with mice. We can make each of them die a hundred deaths."

It seemed doubtful whether his objection would help the Japanese any, even were it meant to—as the next speech proved.

"Good enough," the manager agreed. "After breakfast we'll chain the Japanese to palm-trees, line up before them with our automatics, and tell them they are to be shot. We'll aim just over their heads. When a Jap hears a report and senses the bark flying from the trunk, two inches from his hair, he will undergo all the nervous strain of a man who is being shot to death, and yet will remain to suffer again."

Deane's complexion turned sickly and sallow, like that of a man about to be overcome by seasickness.

"I think I shall prefer to be excused from such play," he said. "I'm afraid I'd make a very poor cat."

The president objected on different grounds.

"I endorse your cat-and-mouse idea," he said. "That's splendid. But can't you arrange to carry it out without injuring my palm-trees?"

"My suggestion was a hasty one," the manager explained. "Anyway, the trees are too near the road. The shooting would attract attention, and our sport would bring us into undesirable notoriety. But we might drive staples into the sides of the garage, and tie the Japs there. The machines could be removed."

"And my garage turned into a sieve," objected the president.

"Well, we'll hear you make a suggestion."

"Why not put ropes around their necks and give them a taste of hanging; alternately raise and lower them. We could carry the ropes over a long horizontal beam. Why, there's one in my son's gymnasium. Such a method would make no noise, damage no property, and cause no inconvenience to anyone except the Japanese. And it certainly would inconvenience them,—very much more than the popping of fire-arms, and the whizzing of bullets which 'never touched them'."

"Good enough," said the manager. "This promises to be better sport than shark-hunting and tuna-fishing in the lochs of Pearl Harbor."

"Oh, we can have plenty of sport," said Atten. "But when that part of the program is finished, what then?"

"Why, then the sport becomes dead earnest," answered the manager, with emphasis on the "dead."

Atten's legal training was strong within him. His soul revolted at the idea.

"This is getting too serious," he said. Obviously he needed "coaching" in Island methods.

"Now, see here, Mr. Atten," argued the president, "a legal jury can condemn a man to death, can't it?"

"Of course. That is, it can find him guilty."

"And a legal jury is just twelve men. And is not the decision of those twelve men frequently determined by the opinion of three or four out of the twelve?"

"It frequently is."

"And aren't we just as fit to make up a responsible court as any judge, district attorney, and set of jurymen likely to be gotten together in this island? Remember some of the men who have been nominated for the office of judge. Why, many of our voters are barely able to read and write. If there were no men like us, to see that responsible men are elected as judges and district attorneys, the Lord only knows who might be chosen."

"Just the same, our judges compare very favorably with those on the mainland."

"Precisely, and it is for the reason I gave a minute ago. We, and other men of property, put

our influence behind the more responsible candidates. And that brings me to the point of my argument. If it is we who decide who shall be elected as judges and district attorneys; if we govern the deliberations of juries; are we doing anything unreasonable in trying a case ourselves?"

"No, in a sense we are not. But wouldn't it be going rather far, if we condemned men to death?"

"But judges and juries condemn them to death. And we have decided that judges and juries are made of no better stuff than ourselves."

"True."

"We create the judges and govern the juries. Then, in the name of common sense, why not go direct to the point? why waste time in cranking up the cumbrous machinery of the law?"

"That's right."

"If we were actuated by motives of malice, robbery or revenge, the case would be altogether different. But we are not actuated by any such motives. All we want is to see a set of pests swept off the face of the earth. Why, a few minutes ago, you admitted that these men were outlaws. What is the use of starting the whole argument over again? If they are outlaws, their lives may be taken by any citizen."

Atten started to say that the men "had not been declared outlaws by the courts," but he was interrupted by the president:—

"Why, man, you talk as if you were still in your native California! Have you lived ten years in Hawaii and not yet learned our ways? When we believe that using a club is the best way to

get results, we use the club. Why, I can remember the day—I was a boy at the time—when a mob charged up the stairs to the legislative chamber and smashed in the doors, with axes, because the new king whom the legislature had elected, wasn't the choice of the people. It's true they let him ascend the throne, but I can remember the uprising of '87 when we had him penned in his palace until he came to terms; and the revolution of '93, when we drove out royalty and established a republic; and the insurrection of '95, when from the roof of the Judiciary Building we shot the insurrectos down like dogs—yes, shot them from the roof of the Judiciary Building itself, sir. That's the sort of a country this is! There's something volcanic in its atmosphere.'

"That's the tune," the manager applauded. "This is a place where we settle our quarrels ourselves," and he thought, "Our president's all right. When he quits his philosophy for fire, he can furnish the fire."

Atten was silenced. He did not want to "start the whole argument over again." He wanted an excuse to dispose of the prisoners, and the president's argument impressed him as perfectly sound.

"All right," he said. "It was only my legal training, getting the better of me, that made me talk as I did. We'll settle this case ourselves. But let me suggest that while we are talking here, planning our cat-and-mouse campaign, our friend Crane may be making his escape. Isn't it more important to get hold of him?"

"That's the idea," agreed the manager. "Just let us get our hands on him! We've got to get him. Think of it! All last night, while we thought he was lying on the wet ground, drenched by the drip from the trees, he was luxuriating in a good bed in the hotel, and laughing at us for a bunch of nanny-goats."

"I think it can be managed quite easily," answered the president, "and I think we had better let Mr. Carding manage it. Mr. Carding, suppose you take some of your men to the hotel and get hold of that fellow somehow. I think that, once you are on the ground, a method will suggest itself,—a method which you can manage quietly."

"Yes, sir," and Carding swelled with importance. He gathered his men, hurried from the grounds, and boarded an electric car for Hotel street.

As he sat in the car, he wondered within himself what would be the actual fate of the prisoners.

"The manager would like to shoot every one of them," he thought, "but I don't believe we'll go that far. The old man is pretty conservative; half of what he gave Frank Atten was only for the sake of argument. They'll probably ship the Japs out of the country. But, as for Crane—I don't know."

In a few minutes the car was in front of the hotel. Carding entered the lobby. There followed a confidential interview with one of the bell-boys.

"He went out half an hour ago," that young man reported. "But Jimmy followed him. And here comes Jimmy right now."

James entered—breathlessly.

"He went up the valley, Mr. Carding. He took a tram-car to the end of the line, and then he hiked up the road toward the Pali. I came right back on the same car."

"Thank you, Jimmy," and Carding made a donation. He hurried back to Manoa valley, for a brilliant idea had come to him. But, instead of going directly to the president's house, he made a detour to his own home on Fort street. There he secured a small, paper parcel. After placing it carefully in one of his side-pockets, he hurried to make his report.

"He has left the hotel and has hiked up the road to the Pali; but I know a way to get him. We'll use the wolf-hounds. And here's the article which will give them the scent. It's a handkerchief which he lost one day—the day I followed him to the other side of the island. I have preserved it for such an emergency, and here it is." Carding produced the paper package.

"That was very thoughtful of you, Mr. Carding," the president commented. "But you have had that handkerchief in your possession for some days now. I am afraid it would suggest to the dogs nobody but yourself."

A guffaw of laughter from the manager, endorsed the president's opinion.

Carding had a different notion.

"Oh, I don't know," he answered. "I think he had a cold. And I've kept the handkerchief carefully wrapped in oiled paper."

"Very thoughtful. Very thoughtful," replied

the president. "But I believe the bed-clothes will serve our purpose better."

"That's the plan," agreed the manager. "But have the dogs been trained as trackers? The only wolf-hounds I ever had dealings with, were utterly worthless for work of that sort."

"They have been trained," answered the president. "Those dogs once belonged to the high sheriff. We'll use them, and we'll show them the bed-clothes. Even if that fellow hadn't slept here, we could take the dogs to the hotel and let them get the scent from the bed he occupied last night. I don't believe we'll need that handkerchief, Mr. Carding."

The president called up the keeper of the dogs, and ordered him to bring the animals at once. They came within an hour, when they were led to the bed which Crane had occupied. From the bed they were taken to the tree where he had been tied. Both dogs gave every evidence of having taken the scent. They snuffed and whined and were eager to follow Crane's trail down the road toward the hotel.

Carding and the manager were provided with horses. Each man strapped a murderous automatic about his waist. At ten o'clock they set off for the Pali road. The keeper of the dogs, leading the ferocious brutes, followed close behind. The column was closed with a dozen Koreans, each armed with a cane-knife.

The day promised to be propitious for the hunt. There was no sign of a cloud. The great white roll which ordinarily overhung the hills, had

disappeared completely. The lustrous green of the summits stood out sharply against a sky which was intensely blue.

At the end of the car-line, the dogs picked up the scent. Away they went, as fast as the men could walk, leading the way steadily toward the Pali. At a point where a narrow foot-path diverged from the road they left the road for the path. The manager remembered it as a short-cut that saved half a mile.

"That fellow seems to know something about this island," he commented.

Presently they had traversed the path and were following the main road once more. A gigantic sight-seeing auto, loaded with tourists, rumbled past them, the passengers looking curiously at the party. The savage dogs in the lead, straining at their leashes, together with the armed men on horseback and the Koreans with their cane-knives, combined to give a warlike tone to the expedition. The megaphone man, though totally unacquainted with the manager and ignorant of his purpose, made an announcement:

"The high sheriff of Hawaii and posse, pursuing escaped criminals."

The machine was rolling away in a cloud of dust, but the manager caught the words.

"It's a wonder he didn't try to make them believe I'm Simon Legree," he growled. "I tell you, Carding, these 'publicity' people are turning this island into a Midway Plaisance. Everything in the island is a show, you and I included."

Up the road they went. Then down the grade

to where a track branched off to the southeast. Without the slightest hesitation, the dogs turned into the side road.

"That tells the story," exulted the manager. "He is bound for the W plantation. I told you he'd make a break for some sugar plantation. We'll find him trying to hide himself there."

Carding was doubtful. "I don't know. I've tried to track that fellow before. He may keep on, past the plantation, until he reaches the lighthouse road. Then he can come around the hills and double back into Honolulu. He may have lured us over here to lose us, while he returns to Honolulu to play some more of his tricks."

"All right. I tell you what we'll do. You keep right after him with the dogs and half of the men. I'll take the rest. I'll go back to Honolulu. I'll follow the road to the southeast, along the leeward side of the hills. Then, if he tries to double back, I'll meet him."

The manager promptly reined his horse around. He selected half a dozen Koreans and ordered them to follow him. They turned to climb the grade which they had descended only a few minutes before.

With a wave of his hat, Carding parted from the manager and urged his horse after the dogs.

XX

A CAPTURE

DRESSED in cool "Palm Beach cloth," Crane stood on the verge of the cliff, where the mountains broke off and plunged to the plain below as though sliced down by a gigantic knife. For a minute he rested, looking down on a landscape dyed with the vivid colors of the tropics. Far below lay rolling lands of red earth, pineapple plantations and small villages, stretching out to the distant shore with its coral reefs and dark blue ocean. Above him were jagged volcanic peaks, clothed in the brightest tangle of tropical jungle. Glancing at everything, he closed and replaced the canteen that swung from his left shoulder, and started down the road to the lowlands.

As the manager had guessed, Crane was on his way to the W plantation, for he had conceived the idea of throwing himself upon the hospitality of its superintendent. He remembered the man's good nature. He remembered his treatment of the plantation hands—"quarters rebuilt, using tongue-and-groove instead of rough siding." He remembered his friendship with lieutenant Sherrill, and especially did he recall an invitation which had been extended to himself:—"Come and visit us again, when you have the time, Mr. Crane. Come and stay a week and see something of plantation

life." Now was the time to avail himself of that invitation.

Once settled at the W plantation, Crane could communicate with Sherrill by mail. He could make plans at his leisure. There might be many ways of extricating himself.

He had made a fairly early start, and he needed it, for he should have to walk nearly twenty miles.

"No automobiles for me, this trip," he thought. "I don't intend to have them get hold of the chauffeur and find out from him where I've gone."

Setting his face resolutely up the road to the Pali, he topped the long ascent after an hour-and-a-half of brisk walking, and trotted down the grade to the windward side of the island.

But walking was warm work. Clouds were scarce that day. The whole island was soaked in sunshine. As Crane plodded over the range of little hills which must be crossed before he caught sight of the W plantation, he recalled the day when he had ridden over them, in a motor-car. How delightful that journey had been!

He remembered a glimpse he had caught from the machine, of a picturesque trail coming from a coffee-plantation. He must be at nearly the same place now, and he cast a quick glance to the right. Yes, there it was, cut in the cliffs where they sloped outward to join the lowland. The side of the trail made a deep red scar against the cliff. It was shaded with tall ferns. And along that track came a line of mules, loaded with sacks of coffee. He noted two Hawaiian muleteers, picturesque rascals with broad-brimmed hats, who kept

the animals in motion. But now he had scant leisure to study such pictures. Although he was in good physical condition, he must keep his mind resolutely on the work of "getting ahead."

Plodding steadily on, he came to the gap in the hills affording a first glimpse of the W plantation. Below, in the foreground, lay the lustrous fields of growing cane. Beyond them rose the tall black stacks of mill and pumping-station. Miles away he saw a white drift of smoke, curling up in the blue air and blowing toward the mountains. He knew the smoke must mark the place where they were burning off the "trash" which strews a cane-field after the cutting.

But there was no time to contemplate the landscape. And while Crane did not know himself to be pursued, he was very restless. The only way in which he could ease that restlessness was by constant motion. He broke into a jog-trot as he came down the grade.

Forty minutes later he was at the office and was asking for the manager. But the manager had gone to the lower end of the plantation, to superintend the commencement of work in harvesting a cane-field. The accountant who was in charge of the office, and who remembered Crane, pointed out the field. It was at least three miles away. The man offered the hospitality of a deep wicker chair, and suggested that Crane wait.

No; Crane's restlessness urged him on. In spite of his long tramp, he was not tired. He would find the manager. Squaring his shoulders, he stepped briskly down the road.

The time was afternoon. The temperature had risen, and Crane mopped the perspiration from his face. Well, he was on the plantation now, and could afford to relax his hurry.

The road led him past a long stretch of fields where the crop had been gathered. In some of those fields the "trash" was burning. Others had already been burned over, and lay a blackened waste, ready for the plowing and planting. Through the fields a very light line of portable track had been laid, to carry the little engine and train of flat-cars employed to transport the crop from field to mill.

Beyond the blackened waste lay other fields, where young cane was growing. The sultry sunlight fairly glared on their light lustrous green. And beyond them rose the amazing, vertical front which the mountains opposed to the trade-wind, where the face of the cliff was covered with a green veil of vegetation, and the channels which the rains had carved, showed like a gigantic fluting. Crane speculated on the possibility of climbing the cliff. Apparently the idea was preposterous. Yet he knew that such a place, when seen from the front, always seems much steeper than it is. He remembered that places which seemed absolutely unscalable, had been pointed out to him as containing native trails. But he remembered also that the natives who ventured down those trails, sometimes lost their lives in the venture.

Now Crane was approaching a high stand of growing cane. He saw that it was ripe and ready for the harvest. Behind him he heard the steam-

whistle at the mill booming out a signal, and he recognized that signal as the one by which the laborers were warned that a train was ready to transport them to the fields. And still he saw no sign of the manager.

But, as Crane stopped, and stood turning from side to side, to look for him, he saw a sight and heard a sound which galvanized him into instant activity. The wolf-hounds were coming down the road, half dragging their keeper, and uttering a terrific bay. Crane saw Carding on horseback, with the Koreans at his heels.

"There's just one chance left for me," he thought, and he dashed toward the cane-field. He had less than fifty yards to run. He plunged between its rows.

A cane-field is an excellent hiding-place. It constitutes a maze where, in cloudy weather, the most experienced man may lose himself if unprovided with a compass. There was no danger of Crane's being unable to find his way out, if he wished, for the sun was shining, and he could guide himself by it. But he was lost to anyone who might try to track him.

And then came a second thought. What if they should loose the dogs? The dogs could find him. At any moment he might see the immense, square muzzle and ferocious fangs of one of the savage brutes thrust between the canes. Instantly he began to hear them coming in every rustle made by the breeze. Strange sounds startled him from moment to moment, as he burst his way through the tangle.

Had the dogs been sent after him, this story would end right here, for Crane was totally unarmed. And had the manager of the X plantation been there, they would have been sent after him. But Carding had no intention of using them otherwise than as trackers.

Crane struggled to put as much distance as possible between himself and pursuit. To do so, he kept on toward the hills, guiding himself by the sun and an occasional glimpse of the top of the great cliff. And fortunately the rows of cane ran in that direction.

All around him the great, thick canes, heavy with juice, lay with half their length on the ground. Then they curved upward for ten feet, to weave their long leaves together into a snarl of green. In the twilight of their dense shade, Crane pressed forward, crouching, bending and twisting. Where he was, no breath of air was stirring, but overhead he heard the trade-wind whispering through the highest leaves, tossing them back and forth. And then he heard a very different sound.

That sound was not the baying of dogs. It was the crackling and roaring of fire.

Crane had heard the scream of the locomotive bringing the train-load of cane-cutters. Now he recalled that, when a field of sugar-cane is ripe, and ready for the harvest it is fired on its windward side. The flames, sweeping through it, burn off the leaves, while the heavy stalks remain unharmed. It is true that this method is followed only on the more progressive plantations. On many estates the cane is cut just as it stands, and

is run through the rollers, with leaves, trash, and all. The resulting juice is partly saccharine and partly bug juice in the most literal sense. But on the W plantation they were very progressive. Under the manager's personal supervision, the field was being fired at many points.

As he glanced over his shoulder, Crane caught glimpses of great clouds of acrid smoke, which presently began to sail between him and the sun. He even caught the crimson flash of flames, which glowed an intense and rosy red even under the full glare of the tropical day. Should they reach him, there would be no question as to his fate.

Crane pushed forward desperately, in the hope of escaping from the field before the flames overtook him. Presently he began to realize that he was near the mountains.

The field was only a short half-mile in width, for the plain where this plantation stood, narrowed as it approached the south-eastern end of the island. Suddenly the cane thinned. Before him the gigantic rampart of the mountains rose, two thousand feet above the plain. Scattered rows of cane ascended the low slopes at the foot of the cliff. Crane came out into the open air?

But was he any better off? There he stood between cliff and cane-field. There was no danger, now, of his being roasted. He could avoid that. But immense billows of smoke were surging towards him. And suffocation by smoke is a no less certain, and on the whole a rather more painful, because more lingering, death than burning. Crane thought of the dogs; then of the fire; then

of the smoke. The sound of the fire was roaring in his ears, the billows of smoke were surging toward him, the inaccessible front of the cliff before him. Whichever way he turned, it seemed as though he were lost.

A rattling of rocks caught his attention. A goat, followed by two young kids, had rushed from the field, and was scrambling up the cliff. Crane watched it. Somehow the cliff did not seem nearly so steep as it looked from a distance. It is true that to right and left there were places which were absolutely vertical for hundreds of feet. But everywhere the rains had furrowed its front. Some of the channels showed a pronounced slope. As he watched the goat, he saw it was ascending such a channel. It was following a shadowy but definite trail.

Crane did not wait for second thoughts. After the goats he went. He doubted whether he could have come down that trail. But the ascent was not so difficult, especially as the cliff held hundreds of trailing vines. He climbed with both hands and feet. As a matter of fact, he had emerged from the field almost at the foot of an old native trail, by which the Hawaiians once had been accustomed to cross the mountains.

Higher and higher he climbed, for puffs of smoke began to eddy around him. They spurred him on. But at this height the smoke was not dense enough to be dangerous. Presently he stopped for a breathing-spell. While he rested, he reflected. Suppose the trail led to the top? Might it not be possible to cross the hills and return to

Honolulu? There he might be able to conceal himself and make new plans.

The thought gave him a new impulse. Scrambling and climbing, up he went. The air was humid and hot. His perspiration flowed in rivulets. Frequent breathing-spells were necessary. He was delayed by a few break-neck places, but he passed them safely. Eventually he climbed upon a rocky platform which lay on the very top.

There he rested. He felt like resting. He also felt like eating, and he drew a supply of sandwiches from his pockets. He congratulated himself on having had the sense to bring them. He washed each mouthful down with a draught of tepid water from his canteen.

Crane had escaped. He had saved his life, but what a sight he was! His light suit was streaked brown and green from collar to heels, the coat half torn to tatters. But if he were able to return to his hotel, that night, he could secure fresh clothing. On second thought, should he have left the hotel? Out in these remote districts, if his enemies caught him they would do what they pleased with him. In Honolulu there were limitations, even if he had made himself amenable to the law. Yes, decidedly the best plan would be to make his way quietly back to the hotel.

As he rested, he studied the leeward slope, which he would have to descend. It reminded him of what Sherrill had said of the violent contrasts afforded by districts separated by a very few miles. He knew that, only a few miles away, the slopes were matted with the densest tangle of trees and

underbrush. But here they lay bare. The hills showed as piles of rock-layers. Not Diamond Head itself was as bare as these slopes. When he should be ready to descend, there would be no impediment to his progress. The way would be as clear of obstruction as a city pavement.

On the margin of the sea, directly before him as he looked, the great Koko crater loomed, bare and brown, rising twelve hundred feet above the water. Miles away to the right, he saw the huge circle of Diamond Head. Midway between those craters, the deep green of a grove of cocoa-palms rose from the shore. As Crane watched it, he could see the tops of the trees tossing in the trade-wind, and above the trees he caught the glint of what looked like a sea-gull's wing. The object vanished and reappeared, vanished and reappeared. Then he realised that it must be an aeroplane. Someone was putting the machine through its paces above the seashore.

"One of the staff-officers, I suppose," Crane thought, and wondered whether it were lieutenant Sherrill.

When ready, he walked down the trail at a very leisurely pace. He knew that the road to Honolulu followed the foot of the hills, and he planned to return to Honolulu after dark.

He reached the road and turned toward the city, ten miles away. His long tramp and tremendous climb had tired him. He was undeniably weary and a little footsore. He lingered and looked back for a moment to wave his hat and say,

"Well, Carding, old man, your man-hunt was a failure."

He turned and started up the road to Honolulu. Then he saw the manager of the X plantation.

The manager sat on horseback, a hundred yards away. He was followed by six Koreans. All were looking at Crane.

But Crane's motto was, "Never give up, until you have to give up."

"I'll give them a run for their money, yet," he thought, and he took to his heels. He dashed down the road. With a shout, the manager and his men came in pursuit.

It seemed as though Crane's tactics would accomplish absolutely nothing except to delay his capture by a few minutes. And then it seemed as though those few minutes would be shortened. Before him he saw a bunch of cattle-men on horseback, coming from a cattle-ranch which lay in the immediate vicinity. They raised a shout. Crane looked desperately to right and left. The ground on both sides of the way was open. This time there was no cane-field or grove of trees in which to take refuge. Seemingly there was not a chance for escape.

No help could come, unless it came from the clouds. And it came!!

He heard the humming of an aeroplane, and then he heard a megaphone voice behind him.

"Catch the cord! Catch the cord!"

He recognized the voice. He whirled on his heel. The lieutenant was coming in his biplane. The knotted cord dangled from the framework of

the driver's seat. Weighted with a wrench, it swung fifty feet below the planes.

The picture which Crane saw, stamped itself indelibly on his mind; the biplane swooping to earth; beneath it the manager, red-faced and raging, charging toward him on horseback; the Koreans brandishing their knives; the volcanic hills behind and beyond as a background.

Crane did not stop to study the picture, nor to argue as to why Sherrill should be there. Suffice it that the lieutenant was out for a practice spin, and might as well be in one place as another. Never would he quarrel with Sherrill for happening to fly over that particular spot. He only thought of "catching the cord."

He had been an "eleven seconds" man when in college, and a man running at the rate of one hundred yards in eleven seconds, is making nearly twenty miles an hour. The plane, with power almost shut off, was going no faster than that. As it swept toward him, Crane had no difficulty in keeping pace with the cord. He grasped it at his leisure.

With Crane hanging at the end of the rope, gripping it tenaciously with both hands, the aeroplane increased its speed and lifted.

"Here! Take this," and Sherrill lowered a long, sausage-shaped affair of cords and silk. There was a little ring of iron at one end, on which all of the cords seemed to center. Hooking two fingers over the ring, Crane held it and found that it did not interfere with his grip on the rope.

The aeroplane swung a broad circle across the

cattle-ranch, and swept back to the road, passing a hundred yards above the heads of the manager and his party. It seemed like adding insult to injury. Apparently the manager thought so, too, for he raised his automatic and emptied it in Crane's direction. The action seemed like a piece of childishness. Already the machine had passed a hundred yards beyond him. And then the impossible happened.

A chance bullet grazed one of Crane's fingers and cut the cord. Sherrill uttered a horrified shout. Crane fell like a flash. He saw the earth flying up to meet him.

Of course, the narrow roll of cords and silk was a parachute. Crane had guessed its nature. However, parachutes are unreliable. It seemed for a moment as though this one would not open. Then its silken folds fluttered apart, just in time. Crane landed with nothing worse than a severe jolt.

The manager and his party were right there. They welcomed Crane, if not with open arms, at least with open handcuffs—handcuffs which were instantly snapped on his wrists.

The aeroplane had whirled away toward Diamond Head. There Crane stood in the road, surrounded by grinning Koreans, while the manager sat on horseback and wiped drops of perspiration from his forehead. His expression indicated that he thought he had lived through a great deal during the last two minutes. His words indicated that he thought that Crane had lived through a great deal.

"That beats all my going to school," he said at

last. "Young man, hasn't your hair turned gray? You surely were born to be hanged, for nothing else can phase you," and then he added, "Boys, let's get a horse for this fellow," for Crane had sunk to the ground, being tired probably.

The ranch-house belonging to the cattle-ranch, was close by. There they hired a saddle-horse, which Crane must mount for the return trip to Manoa valley. The visit to the ranch-house afforded him an opportunity to quench his thirst with great draughts of cold water. He had not realized how dry he was.

Between Diamond Head and the hills there was a low ridge where a lava-flow once ran from hills to sea. The party walked their horses up its long southern face. At its top they were four miles from Fort street, three miles from Manoa valley.

They pushed on without delay. They came to Manoa valley just as the day was waning.

Like a broad, red target the sun hung above the rim of the western horizon. With its light at their backs, they turned into the valley road. As they entered the grounds of the president's mansion, John Carding stood on the verandah to receive them.

"Welcome, brother," he chortled, as he caught sight of Crane. "You decided to return, did you? You mean to enjoy our hospitality. We're ready for you."

Attracted by his voice, the president and his associates hurried to the verandah. Atten grinned vindictively.

"Have you made your will?" he asked. "The

rope is ready. Have you any preference as to where we shall hang you? Would you like to select the tree?"

"Hanging is the right word," the manager agreed, "but we'll have some fun with him first. Hanging would be nothing to him after the experience I saw him go through to-day."

"We gave him a few experiences, too, on our side of the island," answered Carding.

"Then you saw him."

"We saw him, and we nearly had him, but he heard the dogs and dodged into a cane-field."

"Why didn't you send the dogs after him?"

"Because the men were ready to fire the field. They burned him out."

"Did you see his escape?"

"Not until he was halfway up the cliff; driven up by the smoke, I suppose. Then I saw him through a glass. He looked like a fly climbing a wall."

"I see. He must have found the old trail. He thought he could cross the hills and double back into Honolulu. But I was ready for him."

"What sort of an experience did you give him?"

"He had his experience trying to escape in a flying-machine."

"A flying-machine!"

"Yes. Just as we were ready to take him, a biplane came charging out of the sky. The driver lowered a rope. Crane grabbed it, and was whirled up into the air. I thought he was gone, and gave him a parting salute with my automatic.

Perhaps one of the bullets cut the cord. At any rate, it broke and down he came."

"He fell from an aeroplane and still lives! How high was that machine?"

"Three or four hundred feet. He had a parachute."

"He needed one. Too bad he didn't break his neck."

"The parachute barely saved him. We found him pretty badly shaken. Between that and the rest of the day's work, he must have had a hair-raising experience. He escaped from the dogs to get into the fire, you say. He escaped from the fire to be driven up the cliff by the smoke. He nearly broke his neck climbing the cliff, and got across the hills to be met by me. He escaped from me for a minute by aeroplane, but fell from the machine. He saved his life by means of a parachute and fell right into my hands. That ought to convince him that he can't escape us."

As the manager rehearsed this catalogue of dangers,—dogs, fire, smoke, cliff-climbing, escape by biplane and fall from mid-air,—it occurred to Crane that the experience might be copyrighted as material for a highly sensational motion-picture drama. However, he was far from feeling that he was at the end of his rope, even if the manager did propose to hang him. But another man remained to be reckoned with.

"Let me make a suggestion," Carding volunteered.

"Well, what is it? Hurry up." The manager was impatient.

"Do you remember the Death Chamber at the palace?"

No, the manager never had heard of it.

"I know the place you mean," answered the president. "But you don't want to behead him, do you?"

"No; but they have some of the finest implements of torture there, ever found outside of a museum; some rare old bone-twisters. Let's use them."

The president reflected for a moment. Then he answered, "I believe it could be managed. But we'll talk it over later. Lock him up with his Japanese brothers for the present. We'll have our dinner now, and talk of torture afterward."

And Carding and the manager, well satisfied with the result of what they called a "good day's work," followed the president along the verandah to where the dining-table had been set in the open air.

XXI

THE PALACE OF THE ISLAND KING

BESIDE one of the widest and most delightful avenues in Honolulu a party of tourists stood facing a pedestal of lava-stone embellished with bronze reliefs of scenes in the history of Hawaii. On their way to visit the territorial Capitol professor Burl and his party had stopped before a relief showing the ship of Captain Cook exploring a tranquil tropic sea which ran to a shore where rioted a tangled grove of cocoa-palms and tree-ferns. Above, on the summit of the pedestal, stood a statue of a Hawaiian king,—erect, dignified, graceful, with one arm extended, a gilded mantle sweeping from his shoulders to his feet. Sunbeams glowed on the golden folds of the trailing robe and glittered on the golden helmet. An inscription informed the public that the statue represented the great King, the Philip of Macedon of the Hawaiian Isles, who had united all of the islands under a single rule.

The statue faced the territorial Capitol. It seemed appropriate that the king should look toward the Capitol, for once it had been the royal palace. Originally built for a semi-barbaric monarch, it still retained almost the tone it had possessed in the days of the kingdom. It

was vast and square and was surrounded with deep, cool galleries, set behind graceful arches. Within the galleries little circular mirrors were fastened against the wall at regular intervals. Their bright polished circles added a bit of glitter which caught and pleased the eye.

The building was of cream-colored concrete. Its plan was quite novel, for the designer had tried to effect a compromise between many types of architecture—the French, the British and the Spanish, adding some features from the Persian, and a few from the Chinese. The result might be called conglomerate. In a mainland city it would look a little odd. But it harmonized so happily with its tropical setting, that I doubt if anyone would have altered it. Burl frankly admired it.

As soon as the tourists entered the Capitol grounds, they saw a graceful park opening before them. Everywhere were palms. There were tall, slender cocoa-palms, rustling in the slightest breath from the sea; and long lines of royal palms, stately as the columns of an antique temple; and there were little fan-palms, fluttering their fans by the side of the walks. Beside the palms were immense banyans from India and oaks from Australia and native trees from the hills of Hawaii, shading wide lawns embroidered with the flaming scarlet of poppies or with the more delicate tints of the flowers of Polynesia; all the color, the languor, the fascination of the tropics. The Hawaiian sun was pouring its warm rays down upon the exotic trees, burnishing their lustrous

green to jade and emerald; and in their midst rose the palace, galleried and many-windowed.

The party lingered for a minute, just inside the gateway. Straight before them they saw a double row of royal palms, bordering the driveway which led to the palace. At the farther end, framed between the trees, rose a long, wide flight of steps leading to the high pillared arch of the entrance. Tourists were descending the steps. The young men wore white linen suits and straw hats, The young ladies were in white dresses. They carried tinted parasols. The light costumes showed brilliantly against the weathered stone, adding a bit of brightness and color and motion which set off the stately architecture, and enhanced the effect.

"Truly a palace for a king!!" said Burl. "The Capitol is an architectural dream. Not ten buildings in ten thousand are as beautiful as it. And yet, with all its charm, there seems to be something lacking. It lacks the royal state of a kingly court. It almost makes one regret that royalty has been abolished from Hawaii."

Now the party started to walk up the avenue. Their plan was to visit the departments of the Capitol. As they went, they plied their Hawaiian guide with questions about everything that caught their attention. There was a bandstand on the lawn, and it attracted the professor's eye.

"I suppose that is the stand which was built for the king's musicians—the Royal Hawaiian band?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir. I've heard them a hundred times, playing in that bandstand."

"And was the Royal Hawaiian band the same organization as the territorial band of to-day?"

"Yes, sir; that is, the same man has led the band ever since it was organized."

"And when was that?"

"It was when the last king came to his throne, nearly forty years ago. In that year a German bandmaster was imported—one well trained in Wagnerian music, and bringing with him a full collection of all the instruments used in a German military band. I can remember the day he landed in Honolulu. At once he selected a crew of natives and began to train them. The natives took most kindly to the training, for the Hawaiians are a music-loving people. He organized a band of forty pieces, which boasted two base-drums and half a dozen deep-toned horns so large they must circle the bodies of those who blew them.

"On all state occasions the musicians attended the king. Ah, those were the good old days! Imagine the island-monarch leaving his palace, escorted by his guards, the sunlight glancing on the lines of slanting bayonets, the Royal Hawaiian band at the head of the column. Imagine the cheers of the picturesque crowd, the crash of the music, the pungent odor of spent powder! But the glory and spirit of those times have gone, never to return."

When the guide mentioned the king, he removed his hat. His bronze face glowed as he dwelt on the glories of the old regime. He carried his hearers with him on the current of his enthusiasm.

But Burl was surprised to see a Hawaiian dis-

playing so much sentiment. He had believed Hawaiians an unthinking and materialistic lot.

The guide led them up the wide stone steps and within the square entrance. He would conduct them through the legislative chambers.

To reach those chambers they must pass the the office of the territorial governor. From the door of the office there hurried an army-officer in full uniform,—a tall, straight, muscular, well-built man, his uniform fitting him like a glove. They recognized lieutenant Sherrill.

"I don't want him to think I hold any ill-will on account of that mistake at the W plantation," Burl thought, and he came with hand extended to greet the lieutenant.

The lieutenant was equally eager to acknowledge the greeting. A minute before he had seemed to be in all the rush of a man on "official business." Now he had plenty of time. In fact, he would accompany the party on its tour of the Capitol.

He fell into step beside a tall girl, all in white, with a light blue ribbon around her blond hair. On the shoulder of her dress there blushed a pink rose. Her cheeks were as pink as its petals. A great wreath of crimson carnations fell from her shoulders to far below the waist of her dress, a gorgeous bit of tropical color against the white fabric.

"Is this your first visit to the Capitol, Miss Burl?" he inquired.

"No, it is our second. We were here some days ago, but we brought no one with us to show us around, and our visit was not very satisfactory."

"Then you prefer to have a guide?"

"Indeed, we do! When we were here before, all we could do was to ramble through the park and wander wonderingly beneath those vast porticoes. We had no one to explain anything to us."

"If only you had let me know, I should have been only too happy to conduct you. But perhaps you never would have dared trust yourselves to my guidance, after your experience that afternoon."

"Don't think so for a moment! We have forgotten everything that happened that afternoon, except its very delightful conclusion."

"That's very nice of you. And is your guide a success?"

"He is perfect! He is a real Hawaiian, who was here at the time when the Islands were ruled by a king—the king who built this palace. How much more interesting he makes our visit! He is simply wrapped up in the glory of the old days!"

"Yes, the Hawaiians are a people who appreciate display, and the king gratified their love for that sort of thing. The king was very fond of show."

"So we judged, from what our guide told us. He has been describing the days when the king occupied this building as his palace."

Now they had entered one of the legislative halls, and the guide was expatiating on the brilliance of the court which had been held in that very apartment.

"Do you believe it actually was as brilliant as he claims?" Miss Burl asked the lieutenant.

The lieutenant endorsed the guide, without reserve.

"I have always understood that the last king was very fond of display. Before he came to the throne the Hawaiian monarchy was no better than an advanced form of barbarism. But Kalakaua had ambitions. He would imitate European royalty. He aimed to reign with regal magnificence,—Kalakaua, King of the Hawaiians. Although he had only a hundred thousand subjects, he sent a commission to Europe to study and report upon the ways of kings. He himself made a journey around the world. After his return his palace blazed with glory and glitter. I'm sure it was as the guide says."

"He seems to believe the palace showed best at night."

"Is there not a charm in artificial illumination, which the full glare of day never possesses?"

"Isn't there, though? I should have loved to come here on one of those nights that our guide describes. Tell me, Mr. Sherrill, is the Capitol always closed at night nowadays?"

"It is unless the legislature is in session and prolongs its sitting into the night. Then you might have an opportunity to see these rooms illuminated."

"And when will the legislature be in session?"

"Not for many months; the legislature does not meet this year."

"Then we shall have to give up all notions of visiting the palace by night?"

Had the speaker been anyone else than Miss

Burl, the lieutenant would have simply agreed and let the matter drop. Under the circumstances, he "wondered whether it couldn't be arranged?"

"I have a little influence," he explained, "and I think I might arrange for a permit. Of course, there would be a small expense for lights and janitor. But, if your father thinks as you do about it, and feels that he could entrust himself and his party to me——"

"Now, please don't bring that up, Mr. Sherrill," flashing him a smile of thanks.

"And, as for my father, I'll persuade him in two minutes," and she hurried to the professor.

At that moment a page stepped into the room. He was followed by a stout man, of rather more than middle age, dressed in a white duck suit. The man was aggressively square-shouldered and red-faced. His iron-gray beard was trimmed rather short.

The boy pointed out lieutenant Sherrill.

"There's the party you're looking for," he said.

The man turned to the lieutenant.

"Are you lieutenant Sherrill, from Fort Ruger?"

"I am."

"I have been trying to reach you by telephone. The reason why I wish to see you is because I am looking for a Mr. Kenneth Crane. He is not at his hotel. They referred me to you. They suggested that perhaps you can tell me where to find him."

The lieutenant hesitated.

"I am not informed as to where Mr. Crane is

just now. Did he leave no word as to when he will return to his hotel?"

"None whatever."

The lieutenant eyed his visitor half doubtfully and then inquired,

"May I ask your name and the nature of your business with Mr. Crane?"

"I am James Coburn, sir, master of the American ship Agamemnon. If I can find Mr. Crane, it will be to his advantage."

Sherrill remembered Coburn was one of the minority stockholders. Slowly he drew a letter from an inner pocket.

"I received this note last night. It is the latest communication I have had from Crane. It is rather indefinite, but it may be of some assistance," and he handed it to the captain.

The captain read as follows:

My dear lieutenant: Please don't give yourself any concern over what you saw this afternoon. The whole affair was the outcome of a practical joke plus a mistake on my part. While a little shaken by my thrilling experience, I am all right, and am about to enjoy for a few days a very delightful sojourn with some very good friends of mine. They are doing their best to entertain me. In fact we are planning a night visit to the territorial Capitol for to-morrow evening. Later, if you are interested, I shall take pleasure in calling at your quarters, to explain how the mistake occurred.

Yours very truly, Kenneth Crane.

"This note was brought to the Fort last night," the lieutenant explained, for it was the morning

after Crane's escape and capture. "The messenger gave it to a sentry, who brought it to me."

The captain studied the message.

"It sounds a little peculiar," he said. "Of course, I don't know what the incident was to which he refers, but——. Do you think this note is genuine? Are you sure this is Crane's handwriting?"

"I thought of that, and I compared it with another note, which he sent to me once before. The writing appears to be the same, although this note shows traces of haste and nervousness, which are no more than natural. I happen to know that Crane had been under considerable nervous strain, yesterday," and the lieutenant thought to himself,

"Strain enough to destroy the nerve of a government mule."

Professor Burl approached and addressed the officer:

"My daughter tells me that you have been so kind as to offer to get us permission to make a night visit to the Capitol, this evening. We should be most happy to avail ourselves of the offer, and to defray any expense that might be incurred."

The captain caught the words. They gave him an idea. If he were to join Sherrill's party that night, it would give him an opportunity to meet Crane and his party, and to meet them in a perfectly natural way. It would suit his plans to a T. He said as much to Sherrill.

In a few words the lieutenant explained the situation to Burl. An introduction followed.

"Anyone whom lieutenant Sherrill brings, will be very welcome to our party," Burl protested.

Now that Sherrill was interested, the whole matter moved on oiled wheels. He made another visit to the governor's office, where the necessary permit for "lieutenant Sherrill and party" was secured in a moment. The janitor was summoned and interviewed. He would be only too happy to earn a gratuity by being there that evening to unlock and light the building. Captain Coburn would meet the party at the hotel.

It was eight p. m. when they met in the lobby of the hotel. Captain Coburn was there. He had exchanged his light straw hat for a black broad-brim, and his white duck suit for a blue serge.

A few minutes' walk brought them to the western gateway to the Capitol grounds. They saw the great building, with all of its windows alight, glowing nobly among the trees. While the grounds were not "spangled with hundreds of lanterns," their dark shade rendered the illumination of the Capitol the more impressive. As the party ascended the short avenue, the great square portal showed before them a blaze of light, in which they saw in black silhouette the figure of a servant who would conduct them through the galleries and halls.

They entered a wide vestibule and ascended a curving staircase, came to a pair of doors magnificently carved from koa wood, and waited

while their guide unlocked them. He bowed the party into a room which had been the scene of a hundred royal receptions when the king was on his throne.

In the days of the Hawaiian monarchy it had been the royal audience chamber. The frescoed ceiling still was decorated with the arms of Hawaii. The dais was furnished with a pair of high plush chairs, upholstered in scarlet and gold, and above them hung a superb plush canopy, heavily brocaded and crowned with a golden eagle, for they were the throne-chairs on which the king and his consort had rested. Between them was a doorway leading from a robing-room; it was covered with portieres of deep, rich, moss-green velvet. All around the walls were richly framed canvases,—portraits of European kings and of former native rulers. Great prism chandeliers, glittering with crystal pendants, searched the apartment with their light.

The rich carpet under foot, the soft tints of the walls, and the paintings in their gilded frames, blended with the carven oak and glittering upholstery to leave an impression of utter sumptuousness.

"What a setting for a court-reception!!" said Miss Burl. "How this hall must have sparkled when filled with brilliant uniforms and rich dresses, 'fair women and brave men,' and all the rest, you know."

She was speaking to lieutenant Sherrill, who had gravitated to her side, somehow. He thought that never had the young lady looked more

charming. She wore her white silk dinner dress, and had thrown the wrap aside. In deference to the tropical climate, the officer wore a white uniform. The uniforms of the "staff" had greater possibilities than those of the "line." His tunic glittered with golden shoulder-straps and braid.

Now they stood face to face. Behind them a great curtain of the richest, deepest, moss-green velvet hung in heavy folds. The deep folds of the curtain, the glitter of the uniform, the light glancing on the lady's dress, combined to make a brilliant picture. But perhaps Miss Burl's girlish face was more delightful than all the rest.

"Imagine the scene," she continued, "when these portieres were flung wide, and the dusky announcer shouted 'The King,' and the island monarch entered, bowing to right and left, his consort leaning on his arm!"

The lieutenant smiled at her sparkling enthusiasm. Then he suggested that her reference to brilliant uniforms at the king's receptions, was particularly happy.

"They say that the state costumes of the king and his cabinet were miracles of gorgeousness," he explained. Then he paused and repeated the words "miracles of gorgeousness." He seemed to like the phrase.

"They say," he continued, "that the artist who designed those uniforms, attempted to snatch all the colors from the spectrum and all the glory from the aurora borealis. Such combinations of

scarlet brocade, sky-blue velvet and gold lace have seldom been seen in the world's history. In fact, they say that the reign of his dusky majesty was one long vaudeville performance."

"I suppose," the young lady answered, "that when a people make their first attempts at playing at royalty, those attempts are apt to be a little crude. But I can't help regretting that those days are gone."

"I wouldn't," he answered.

"Yet they certainly had the glory and glitter of outward show."

"I know. Pomp and parade and publicity."

"And we may regret their picturesque side."

"Yes. But on the inside there was nothing but license and licentiousness. The old simile of the marble sepulcher fitted the court precisely."

"Beautiful to see——"

"But within, all was corruption. And there was a cruel side to the Hawaiian kings. In former reigns, according to the old custom, the fate of anyone who tried to interfere with the king's prerogatives, had been perfectly certain. The execution had been very sudden and very informal—so informal that, in some reigns, the king himself had served as executioner. But when the last king came to the throne, he would introduce more formality. The method of administering the punishment, would be more awe-inspiring. He ordered a Death Chamber as one of the appointments of his palace.

"It was constructed deep within the foundations. It was built of dark volcanic stone, with walls so

thick that not a groan might reach the outer air. Within it were placed the head's-man's block and axe, of the most approved medieval pattern. And there were installed instruments of torture, calculated to wring confession from the most stoical,—the wheel, the rack, the screw."

"Oh, horrors!"

"Pray don't distress yourself, for the things never were used. At first they were a laughing-stock. Later they were forgotten. To-day there are very few in Honolulu who know that such a place ever existed."

"But what became of the place?"

"I suppose it still is there. In fact, the only time its use was seriously proposed was after the king's death."

"Who was so hard-hearted as to propose it?"

"It was the queen, his successor, and this was how it came about. After the queen had been driven from her throne, and a republic had been set up, Congress sent a representative to Honolulu, to consider her restoration. The queen was asked whether, if restored to power, she would grant a general amnesty. She answered that "she would grant it to all except the leaders; as for them, the law must take its course." The law meant—decapitation. That answer settled the question as to whether Congress would restore the queen to power."

"She must have been vindictive."

"You must remember her descent from a long line of savage and barbaric ancestors and judge her accordingly."

While they talked, the other members of the party had left the room. A little embarrassed, they turned to follow.

The lieutenant's account of the Death Chamber had stimulated Miss Burl's imagination.

"I can imagine the secret vault, given up to dust and cobwebs," she said, "locked and forgotten, down among the foundations. Oh, wouldn't it be an adventure if we could find it! Have you ever seen it, Mr. Sherrill?"

"It has been pointed out to me. We army-officers are initiated into many things of which the general public knows very little."

"Then you could find it for us."

"I certainly could, Miss Burl. No doubt this man who opened the building for us, has the key."

"Do get him to open it for us. Just think what an adventure! All of us creeping by the light of a lantern, along some dark and narrow passage, between walls of volcanic rock, until we reach the mysterious chamber, where we shall see grim relics which will recall to our minds those we saw in the Tower of London."

The lieutenant needed no urging. He hurried to speak to the man who carried the keys. But the man denied all knowledge of such a room. A native Hawaiian, he was loyal to his former rulers. He asserted indignantly that the king never would have tolerated such a place.

"That sounds queer," Sherrill thought "He seems a little too indignant. There is something very odd about this fellow."

He had a fair recollection of the location of the

room. While the man led the party around one of the galleries, Sherrill drew an electric torch from his pocket, quietly separated himself from the others, and sought the basement of the building.

He found the passage which he remembered as leading to the room. It was almost as Miss Burl had imagined it,—low and narrow and running between walls of black volcanic rock. He traversed it by the glow of his electric torch. Suddenly he shut off the light. A sharp bend in the passage had brought him before the door, which instead of being locked, was partly open. Within the room there were lights and noises. Sherrill decided to investigate before announcing himself.

Cautiously he reconnoitered. What he saw was quite enough. He hurried to the upper floors and sought captain Coburn.

"Captain Coburn," he began, "will you oblige me by coming to one side? I want to speak with you."

The captain came.

"You came here this evening, expecting to meet another party, which would include Mr. Crane."

"Yes, sir. He's the man I'm looking for."

"Have you any idea he might have gotten himself into some difficulty?"

"He might."

"In case you found he had gotten into difficulties, would you be inclined to help him?"

"If the officers of the X Sugar Company were making the trouble, I'd certainly help him all I could."

"Then come with me."

They descended to the vaults and threaded the narrow passage, the glow of Sherrill's electric torch playing on the stone walls as they went. Suddenly the lieutenant snapped off the light. He and Captain Coburn, themselves unseen, stopped where they could glimpse the interior of the Torture Chamber.

They lurked in the shadow and peered around a corner of the passage. It was a cave-like room into which they looked. The low ceiling of the vault hung in heavy arches. The walls were solid and unbroken. The floor was the dark stone.

The place was perhaps twenty feet square. The only light was furnished by electric torches, which played fitfully over walls and furnishings.

Those furnishings were as Sherrill had said—modern copies of the instruments of torture of the Middle Ages; vague and only half revealed by the uncertain light.

On one of them—a heavy wooden frame, resembling a low bed—a Japanese was stretched. At the head of the bed two Koreans revolved a windlass. The side of the framework was toward the entrance. Beyond it the manager and officers of the X Sugar Company rested on chairs. Crane stood between two Korean guards. In the background groups of Japanese were guarded.

The dull glow of electric torches, the pale, death-like faces of the Koreans, the low, frightened chattering of the Japanese, made a scene which was weirdly impressive. Except the frightened murmurs of the prisoners and the creaking of the windlass, there was no sound to be heard save

the low humming of a fan which drew air to the room through a subterranean passage.

As Sherrill studied the scene, he wondered that they had not commenced with Crane. As a matter of fact, the manager had proposed it.

"Let's begin with this fellow," he had said, and had struck a stinging blow with his riding-glove on the side of Crane's face.

"Let's end with this fellow," Atten had interrupted. "Let's have him see the fate of his helpers first. We'll torture him fifteen times over that way."

Now they thought Crane absorbed in watching the "expedient ruthlessness" of the punishment of the Japanese. They thought his mind full of wretchedness as he sensed what would come to him. It would have surprised them to know that his thoughts were drifting from the room. A man's thoughts and his situation, frequently are incongruous enough.

Crane's mind reverted to the morning of his arrival in Honolulu, when from the deck of the "Nevada" he had beheld for the first time the gorgeous tropical landscape. He recalled vividly the pictures he had watched from the steamship—the white coral, the blue sea, the green palms—the rolling of the waves, the foaming of the surf, the waving of graceful branches. That memory evoked another, of those delicious days spent in circumnavigating the island. How remote it all seemed now! Well, he who embarks in hazardous enterprises must be ready to take the consequences.

But now captain Coburn was watching, and Coburn's mind did not wander from the business in hand. He rose to the situation. In a breathless whisper he outlined his plan to Sherrill. Noiselessly he made his way to the upper floor; then rushed from the building.

XXII

COBURN TO THE RESCUE

FROM the palace to Borneo pier the distance was a scant half-mile, and at Borneo pier the four-masted ship Agamemnon lay moored. Its tall masts and heavy spars rose dimly in the still night air, looming above the broad roof of the shed which covered the wharf. The great arched entrance to the shed yawned, black and cavernous, before captain Coburn.

He entered hurriedly. The sound of his heavy tread on the concrete, aroused the watchman, who came running. But he recognized the captain, and escorted him to the Agamemnon's gang-plank.

On board a sailing-ship the quarters for the officers are aft; those for the men are forward. Coburn turned toward the Agamemnon's cabin. He found the door to Mr. Swanson's stateroom, and rapped.

"Who's there?"

"The captain. I need you, Swanson."

"Yes, sir. One minute," and Coburn heard the scraping of a match. The first mate flung himself into his clothes, while the captain was arousing the second mate. All three men met at the square dining-table, where Coburn had coaxed a light to the wick of the swinging lamp.

"What's up, captain?"

"Sit down, boys, and I'll tell you. A bunch of sharks have hold of a friend of mine. They haven't done much to him, so far, but I guess they mean to torture the life out of him, before they finish. What do you say if we rouse the crew, arm them with capstan-bars, and clean out the gang? Are you with me?"

"You bet we are, captain!" Both mates were emphatic.

"Good! We've thirty men for'ad. They'll handle those sharks as though they were yellow dogs."

Captain Coburn was quite correct when he said he "had thirty good men forward." Whatever the lurid sensation-monger may say to the contrary, competent seaman can be obtained. The ship-master who "doesn't know where to find them," who permits the shipping of a crew of incompetents, is himself an incompetent. No one had ever accused captain Coburn of that.

The thirty men who sailed "before the mast" in the *Agamemnon*, were husky and hearty and up to their work; and all of them were Norwegians. There were those among them who needed a strong hand over them, but captain Coburn possessed that sort of a hand,—two of them, in fact.

These men bunked in the forward-house, a square structure, built at the foot of the foremast. There the captain and his mates went. Swanson entered.

"Turn out, boys. Some of the captain's friends are in trouble, and there's going to be a fight."

A fight! Would the Norwegians come? Will a cat lap cream? A succession of heavy thuds were

heard, the sound of men springing from their bunks to the deck.

As the men came out, they were lined up near the gangway. Lights were brought, ship's lanterns and sidelights. What a picture it was! Above them, the mighty shaft of the mainmast towered aloft, supported by its heavy shrouds, its wide spars outlined against the starlit sky. At the foot of the mast the lines of men, ranged between the heavy bulwarks, were half revealed by the dim beams of lanterns. Just roused from sleep, curious and expectant, they waited to hear what the captain would say.

Captain Coburn's face was revealed by the volcanic glow of the big cigar which he puffed furiously. Now he removed the cigar and spoke.

"Boys, we're going to have a little fun. We've got to clean out a little bunch of sharks and a crew of Koreans. We could handle them all with our bare hands, but we'll take along the capstan-bars and a few belaying-pins. I expect we'll finish this job and all be back in our bunks in an hour's time."

Under the mate's direction, they ran for the bars. They were provided also with short lengths of cord, to be used in tying prisoners.

In amazement, the watchman stood by the side of the gang-plank and saw the long line file down to the pier.

"What does it mean?" he asked Swanson.

"Captain's orders. We've got to go ashore, but we'll be back during the night."

The captain marched his men out from the pier,

and formed them into column of fours. The two mates closed the rear of the column. Captain Coburn was on his way to the scene of action. When he returned to the Capitol, he would come with the crew of the Agamemnon at his back.

There are oaks in Honolulu,—Australian silk oaks, standing prim and slim and tall as poplars,—and, being Australian oaks, they are always covered with leaves, and in the shadow of their leaves there stands an iron fence of an intricate pattern, and that fence guards the grounds of the territorial Capitol, once the royal palace.

Burl and his party stood at the gateway, where they waited for the return of captain Coburn. All around them the ground was darkened by the shadows of the silk-oaks. Outside, the arc-lights glittered on the pavement and on the road, making a brilliant background against which the barrier showed in sharpest silhouette. It was a combination full of contrast,—the deep shade of the trees, the glare of the arc-lights, the iron bars ruling the road with their black pattern. They watched the picture in silence.

What a situation it was! Coming to the Capitol as tourists, bent on an evening's outing, to find themselves plunged into an intrigue and struggle which recalled the methods of the Middle Ages, when Montagues and Capulets fought out their feuds. Before their very eyes the balance was wavering. They could not go without first seeing how it would settle.

All around them spread the beauty of the quiet

night. The soft breath of the trade-wind barely stirred the trees. In the park all was balm and palms and the fragrant tropics. Nothing jarred the serenity; nothing jangled. And yet, within the foundations of the building behind them, cruelty was being let loose. Outside there was peace; inside, the barbarities of the Middle Ages were being re-enacted. But,—this was Honolulu!

On the mainland such occurrences would have seemed to them amazingly out-of-date and improbable. But here in Hawaii, with its surging, boiling coral reefs and scarlet flowers and purple gardens, its tropical atmosphere and its isolation from the rest of the world, anything seemed possible.

Now they heard the tramp of marching men, the thud of thick-soled shoes, such as are worn by Norwegian seamen. Captain Coburn was coming with the crew of the *Agamemnon* at his back, tramping along the pavement beneath where the statue of an ancient Hawaiian king stretched out his arm.

Burl and his party thought of the seamen who were coming, and then their minds turned back to the dungeon, the grim, low vault where in fancied security the villains of the play were working their will. Would the men of the *Agamemnon* be able to reverse the situation? Suppose the Koreans to be armed with cane-knives, what then? Had Coburn counted on that?

In truth, Coburn had thought of that. He had thought of it while he stood within the passage, and he had observed that the Koreans were unarmed.

Now the tourists drew back, for the seamen

were entering the Capitol grounds, tramping up the avenue and up the wide stone steps which led to the western entrance. Lieutenant Sherrill waited there, holding captive the care-taker. When he had seized the man, it had become necessary to explain the state of affairs to the tourists.

Captain Coburn halted his party in the hallway. There he marshalled his men in battle array, two by two. He would lead them direct to the rescue.

"Just leave this matter to me," he said to Sherrill. "If you'll guard that fellow, that's all I want."

He placed himself at the head of his men, switched on the current of his electric torch, and led them to a dark stairway. The tourists, who had followed the men into the building, heard them stamping their way down the stone steps.

"Now, quiet, boys," the captain commanded, when they reached the lowest level. Their heavy tread was subdued to a slow shuffling, as they tip-toed toward the end of the passage. They clasped their fingers with a firmer grip on capstan-bars and belaying-pins. A minute more, and those weapons would be in use, as the men would sweep, with a rush and a yell, upon the Koreans.

"Halt!" The captain was standing before the door, but the door was shut,—shut and locked. Through the thick planks came the sound of melancholy howls.

He ran the bright circle of his torch over the wood. How tremendously heavy it was! Cautiously and noiselessly he tested the fastenings. The latch gave, but the door appeared to be bolted on

the inside. Meanwhile, the air in the passage was becoming close and poisonous. Behind him he heard the heavy breathing of the Norwegians, and he knew he could not hold them there long. The only thing to do was to "about face," march to the open air, and make plans for a siege.

Up to the open air they came. The tourists were surprised to see them return without a prisoner. But Coburn explained the situation in a word.

"Door's locked," he said. "We'll have to burst in. Here, you!" and he turned to the native caretaker. "What sort of fastenings have they on that door? Now, tell the truth, if you don't want to find trouble. Play any tricks, and we'll take the hide off you."

Thus encouraged, the man was able to recollect just how the door was fastened. There were "heavy bolts, above and below."

"Any braces?"

"No, no braces."

"Then we can break in. Boys, put the capstan-bars together."

The bars—stout oaken sticks, six feet long, three inches in diameter, and square at one end—were arranged side by side in a square bundle, a bundle which was bound together with cords that had been brought to tie the prospective prisoners. While his men worked, the captain pondered the situation.

So far, he told himself, he had acted too precipitately. He should have reconnoitered the passage once more, before he led his men into it. He had counted too strongly on the situation remaining

unchanged. How he regretted the loss of the opportunity for a complete surprise! But, after all, would it make much difference? The Koreans and their employers would be so embarrassed by the Japanese, that they could not offer much of a defense. Still, there might be fire-arms in the party, and if it took long to batter in the door, they might be able to put themselves in a position for a very serious resistance. Well, this much was certain, the assault on the door must be made as short, sharp and sudden as possible. Perhaps by good luck it might be driven off its hinges at the first blow. In that case there would be a surprise. The captain directed his men to tie the cords around the bars in such fashion that the knots could be pulled open in an instant. If there should be a surprise, those cords would be needed on the moment.

The capstan-bars were ready, tied together in a fashion which met the approval of both the mates. They were put into the hands of six men, the stoutest in the crew, who were told what was expected of them. Once more the party descended the stone steps.

Coburn, as soon as he had brought his men to the foot of the stairs, stopped them there, while he went in advance. This time he would make a reconnoissance. Perhaps the room had been thrown open in the meanwhile.

No, it still was closed, but he noticed a gleam of light which came through the great keyhole. He heard a muttering of voices within the room. He

knelt with his ear to the opening. Now he could hear the words distinctly.

It was Atten's voice that came to the captain. It appeared that he was lecturing someone.

"Now, you poor, paltry, pitiful yellow pup," he said, "you see what you are going to get. You'd kidnap us, would you, and use 'physical suasion?' I agree with you, physical suasion's the thing; but two can play at that game."

"What a fool you must be," another voice went on, "imagining that you, single-handed, could carry out such a program as yours! You see where you have brought yourself. Yesterday you were hunted over the island, like a jack-rabbit with the hounds after him. To-day we torture you. Tomorrow—you disappear."

Another voice—it was the manager's—broke in.

"Hit her up again, boys, Tear 'em to pieces."

This was followed by a howl of distress.

"I guess I'll change the complexion of this business," thought the captain, and he tip-toed back to his men. Once more he led them down the passage. He stopped them a dozen feet from the door.

That door was a massive affair, a double thickness of heavy planks, heavily bolted together. Had it been in good preservation, a long battering would have been necessary before it yielded. But it had not been built of native wood. Imported oak had been used. The oak had succumbed to dry-rot. Though outwardly sound, it was only a shell.

The men with the capstan-bars, crouched for a rush.

"Now, boys. All ready. Let her go."

And the six men dashed forward with their improvised battering-ram. The door stopped them hardly more than a sheet of paper. It flew from its hinges and fell in splinters on the floor. The men charged to the very center of the place. And on their heels came the rest of the crew, pouring into the room, a living avalanche.

Imagine the scene and the situation! The low vaulted room, with its close, sultry air, the group of sugar-planters made conspicuous by their suits of white duck, the yellow-skinned Koreans, the bronze faces of the Japanese in the background, the door flying in fragments, the shouts of the seamen as they burst in, the rush and clatter of heavy shoes, the crash of falling furniture, the wild jabbering and high-pitched screams of the Orientals, while all the time a fan that drew air into the room through a hidden passage, kept up its droning hum.

"Put out the lights," called the president.

But the lights—electric torches—had been placed on shelves and brackets where they were not easily reached. Before one of them could be extinguished, Coburn's men were tying up the last of the Koreans, and held the employers as prisoners. A bloodless victory had been gained.

But had it? Carding still was at liberty. In the confusion, he had dodged into a dusky corner, afforded by a high cabinet. He saw that all was lost, but he also saw that neither Crane

nor any of the Japanese had been loosed from their bonds as yet. A chair stood just behind Crane. Carding sprang forward, gripped the chair, and swung it for Crane's head. The blow was a vicious one. Crane fell like a log. But the mate of the *Agamemnon* was as quick as Carding. While the young man still held the chair, and before he could raise it in defense, the mate had swung a capstan-bar. Carding fell to the floor, by the side of Crane.

Were either of them killed? A hurried examination decided that, while both had been knocked senseless, neither would suffer anything worse than a severe headache when he came to. Two men lifted each of them, to carry them to the open air.

Meanwhile, the Norwegians had found the key to the handcuffs and were freeing the Japanese. Their fetters were transferred to the wrists of the Koreans. But how the seamen stared around them in astonishment while they worked, wondering at the outlandish machines with which the room was fitted! Such a place never had been dreamt of in their philosophy.

The Japanese were clamoring that the manager and officers of the company should be stretched on the torture bed and given a taste of the treatment they had been giving others a minute before.

"No, no. I'm willing to rescue you fellows, but you must do your own fighting," and Captain Coburn directed his men to collect the electric torches, cut off the current from the fan, and bring everyone to the upper floor.

He noticed the alert movements of the Japanese, who hurried in advance, a grinning, chattering troop.

"You fellows don't seem to be any the worse for wear," he said.

One of them answered with a broad, yellow-toothed grin,

"Japanese very strong. Them fellow no know nothing. Not hurt much. I make loud noise—very bad. Then he think he hurt me."

It seemed that, as torturers, the Koreans had been very amateurish.

Burl and his party were waiting in the vestibule, where lieutenant Sherrill stood with his hand firmly gripped on the collar of the native care-taker. They heard the footsteps of the seamen, stumbling up the stairs. The men entered the hall. What were they bringing? Two dead men? So it seemed, at first glance, for Crane and Carding were totally unconscious; their faces were deadly pale.

The men laid them on the floor and called for water. A bucketful was brought and dashed on the faces of the sleepers. Then they stirred, as consciousness came back.

While the two mates of the *Agamemnon* were administering "first aid to the injured," Sherrill prepared to carry out his promise to conduct the visitors to the vaults. He still carried his electric torch. It glowed in his hand. From the supply which had been seized, four were selected and distributed among the tourists. They turned the

glare of the lights down the dark staircase, and prepared to descend. Sherrill led the way.

Threading their way through the passage, they came to the Torture Chamber. Many of the machines had been overturned when the men of the Agamemnon had rushed in, but the bed where the Japanese had been stretched still stood in the center of the floor, ready for use, just as the president had ordered it placed. Now the party gathered around it, flashing their lights over its levers and cords and heavy beams. The grim machine, in that grim vault, seemed to carry them back through a thousand years of the world's history.

Then came the thought,—who would believe their story, even if they were to tell of the night's experience? The situation seemed incredible. How preposterous was the idea of sober and seemly citizens of Honolulu, dragging their victims into the depths of a subterranean dungeon, to torture them with all the barbarities of the Middle Ages! But here was the evidence before their eyes. Undoubtedly, Hawaiian methods were more primitive than the methods of the mainland.

They turned to explore the apartment, for its subtle fascination still held them. Yes, there were the headsman's block and axe, as Sherrill had said. Well, such objects might appeal to the whim of a semi-barbaric monarch, but who would believe that men of the twentieth century would be the first to put them to practical use.

They had brought the care-taker with them. Now Sherrill required him to restore the fallen

furniture to its proper position. The door was beyond redemption, but another remained in the outer passage. As the party came out, the man turned a ponderous key in a massive lock. The bolts grated, and the passage leading to the Torture Chamber was closed, for possibly another thirty years.

"Isn't there a strong probability that this man may tell of what has happened to-night?" asked professor Burl.

"No probability whatever," answered the lieutenant, with a smile. "I made sure of that, while Coburn was bringing his men. This fellow is frightened to death for fear the authorities will learn that he connived at the illegal use of a government building."

The party returned to the upper floor. They left the building. For the last time that night they stood in the western gateway to the Capitol grounds. Like Lot's wife, they turned for a final look.

They caught a shadowy glimpse of the men of the Agamemnon leading their prisoners to a remote corner of the palace park, where stood a group of gigantic banyan trees. Beneath those trees, within their deep shade, the prisoners would be guarded till the small hours, when they might be marched back to Manoa valley without attracting attention. One by one the lights in the building winked out. Presently the grounds lay dark beneath the starlight, their obscurity only made greater by the glare of the electric arcs outside. Burl and his party started to walk to

their hotel. So far as they were concerned, the evening's adventure was at an end. But the professor only voiced the sentiments of the others when he said,

"I imagine that when Mr. Crane comes to settle accounts with his would-be torturers, there will be interesting developments."

XXIII

BENEATH THE BREADFRUIT

IN MANOA valley once more, and sheltered behind the triple hedge of cocoa-palms. In the president's garden honey-yellow tulips, growing in beds of honey-yellow pansies, were shaded by yellow roses trained over a trellis. The roses were shaded in turn by banana-palms and poplars, and all the while the ear was soothed with the rippling of a little stream bringing water to the flowers and trees. Across the poppy-beds and on the branches above, the saucy mynah-birds were dancing. Their black plumage and their white-banded wings flashed as they darted out from the shadows into the sunshine. The cooing of a dove blended with the splashing of a fountain—a fountain where above the marble basin, a breadfruit tree bent its great green leaves and heavy fruit. The leaves were enormous and their shade was very grateful. By the side of the tree there stood a stone bench, deeply cushioned, and on those cushions the Californian was resting.

Monarch of all he surveyed, he luxuriated in the warmth and the peace and the fruitfulness which surrounded him. At that moment it pleased him to survey the five villains of this island drama, who were obviously at a low ebb in their fluctuating fortunes.

Armed with heavy two-pronged hoes, and driven by the Japanese, they were cultivating the garden, striving to maintain its immaculate order. Kept strictly to their work, perspiration was pouring down their faces and streaking their white duck suits. The dirty and toil-worn appearance of their clothing showed that they must have been kept at their present uncongenial occupation for some days.

Crane placed a fresh piece of ice within the bandage which circled his forehead, for he still suffered from Carding's blow. In fact, he had barely escaped brain-fever. Then he called to Wanto,

"Keep them moving, Wanto. Remember the night in that palace."

Wanto grinned. A few whacks of the bamboos followed. The heavy hoes rose and fell with increased energy.

Now the ice was melting, and the throbbing in the Californian's head subsided. He needed that head just now, for he must plan what to do with the prisoners. He must decide on a way out of the present situation. And the plan must be something rare and bizarre—something to match the country—something with a Honolulu tone. Would it not be well to consult with the Japanese? Wanto was a practical man. Well, he'd think it over.

For the next few minutes he studied Wanto. What a faithful fellow he was! Crane thought of the day before, when it had become necessary to take Charley Deane down into Honolulu's

commercial quarter, where the transfer of shares might be ratified and recorded. The problem had arisen, how to prevent Deane from calling for help and explaining the situation, as soon as he should find himself among friends. The Japanese had solved the problem by volunteering as guard. With a cane-knife concealed beneath his coat, Wanto would walk, a thunder-cloud in bronze, by the side of the treasurer. No danger of Deane's becoming rebellious, so long as the "yellow peril" gripped him.

Crane had argued with the Japanese that he might lose his life in the venture. "And you love life, Wanto, as well as any of us," he had said.

"What of that?" Wanto had answered. "Is it not far nobler to die a hero, bravely fighting in defense of my rights, than to crawl to a dishonorable end?"

Crane had smiled, but the answer had reminded him of Byron's pirates, who sang,

"Let him who crawls enamored of decay,
Cling to his couch and sicken years away;
Heave his thick breath and shake his palsied head;
Ours the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.
While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes control."

It was true that Byron's pirates were freebooters, but they had been driven to it by the world's injustice. Was not their leader a man whose "heart was formed for softness, warped to wrong?" It struck him that there was a strong analogy between those wild adventurers and these

Japanese. But he wondered whether Wanto's attitude had been inspired by faithfulness or by a native bloodthirsty disposition and a dislike for the treasurer. More likely the latter.

Well, whatever his motives, Wanto had played his part most manfully. Nor had he neglected appearances. He had begun by costuming himself for the occasion. Discarding his "business suit,"—the costume of the cane-fields,—he had appeared in one of the president's blue serge suits, which he had appropriated. The president's Panama hat had covered Wanto's black hair. One of the president's perfectos rested between his lips. In his fingers he twirled a light bamboo cane.

Thus arrayed, he was scarcely recognizable. But Deane knew that, all the while, a heavy cane-knife lay concealed beneath that negligee shirt. He knew why the fingers of Wanto's right hand were tucked between the buttons.

However, Crane had felt no serious concern as to the outcome of the day. He had had an opportunity to estimate the treasurer. There was no danger of Deane's chancing an encounter with a cane-knife. Had Frank Atten been in Deane's place, the case would have been quite different. But the treasurer would prefer to play a waiting game. Wanto's mere presence was sufficient to render him perfectly tractable.

So they had gone from office to office and from bank to bank, where Crane had been made acquainted with the business-world of Honolulu. The news of the transfer of shares had been sown broadcast. The former officers and manager had

relinquished their holdings and resigned their positions, all "for value received." A new set of officers would be chosen forthwith. Undoubtedly the Californian would be the new president.

"Have you given up your cruise in Pearl Harbor, Mr. Deane?" one of the members of the Cosmos Club had inquired.

"Oh, I'm only in town for the day," the treasurer had answered. "Don't be surprised if you don't see me again for three weeks or more."

Right here the question might arise as to why the failure of the party to board the yacht never had been noticed. The boat, by Deane's direction, had been anchored in one of the inlets of Pearl Harbor, where it was to await the arrival of himself and party, who would come directly on board on the night of their departure from the Cosmos Club. The Chinese crew had obeyed their orders literally. Their orders were to "wait," and they waited. They waited three weeks, until their supply of rice gave out. When cross-examined, all that could be gotten from them was, "Boss, him say boat wait here—by and by him clum back. We wait."

Wanto, still wearing the president's clothing and smoking one of the president's perfectos, was swaggering about the garden. Some of his comrades were walking with him, twirling the bamboos with which they inspired to activity "the men with the hoes." Others were resting on the lawn, to which they had dragged the costly rugs that had covered the floor of the reception-hall. Magnificent pelts of polar bear and tiger lay on the grass, and

on those pelts the Japanese were lounging, their heads pillowed on those of the animals.

Meanwhile, Crane continued to speculate as to what might be done with the prisoners. The president was working within ten feet of the marble bench. The Californian watched him in amusement for a moment. Then he said,

"Well, old man, now is an appropriate time for you to do some philosophising—philosophising on the dignity of labor. Don't you find that a flow of perspiration promotes a flow of thought? Oh, no, you needn't stop and straighten up your back. Keep right on, or you'll feel the bamboo. The 'yellow-peril' is right behind you."

But the Californian was tender-hearted. A moment later he invited the president to a seat beside him.

The old man dropped his hoe and hurried across the ground to the shade of the breadfruit tree. He sank into the opposite corner of the bench. His chest was heaving, his face was flushed. He mopped the streaming perspiration.

"My God," he groaned, and then again, "My God!"

"Here, drink this," and Crane gave him a glass of lemonade in which the ice floated and tinkled,—although he knew perfectly that half of "Foxy Grandpa's" distress was assumed for effect.

The president grasped the glass with trembling fingers and gulped its contents in great draughts. Then he brightened perceptibly. The cool drink had refreshed him.

"I suppose you think yourself quite a martyr,"

said Crane; "driven to toil beneath the sultry sun of a tropical day. And yet the light work you have been doing is nothing in comparison with that done by the laborers in the cane-fields, harvesting the sugar."

Miserable as he was, the president could not keep from answering with an argument.

"They're Orientals," he argued. "The work doesn't affect them. But it is no sort of work for a white man."

"Oh, Orientals are made of different stuff from white men, are they? That argument has been exploded too many times. Don't you know that in Queensland all of the work of the cane-fields is done by whites? Pshaw! it is a mere matter of being accustomed to the work. Men of any nationality can accustom themselves to it, if they will."

"Well, it's torture to me."

"Torture! That sounds well, coming from you! I should have imagined you would avoid that topic. Have you forgotten the night in the palace? I haven't. The idea of four sober and seemingly citizens of Honolulu, dragging their victims to the depths of a subterranean dungeon, there to inflict atrocious tortures! Were I to tell that story in California, it would not be believed."

"You may never return to California to tell it."

"You think I'm not yet out of the woods."

"I believe so."

"That's as luck may turn. But I believe the gods help those——, you know. My philosophy of life is to help myself. I either get what belongs

to me, or I lose my life. I say with Shakespeare's Clifford,

'I will not bandy you with word for word,
But buckle with you blows, twice two for one.'

"What if you lose your life? You came very near it."

"Then all my troubles are over, so far as this world is concerned. I'll take my chance as regards the next."

Crane was silent for a moment, and then continued,

"There's another reason why I may never return to California. I may settle in Hawaii."

"A sultry tropical climate is intensely disagreeable to many."

"It doesn't affect me. Quite the reverse. I'm fairly fascinated by this country," and the Californian let his mind ramble for a minute while he recalled a bit of parody which he had written one afternoon, when on his excursion to the cane-fields of the west coast.

I want the islands, I want the sea,
I dream of the tropics and reefs of coral,
The woods of koa and camphor and laurel,
Where perfumes are borne on the trade-wind's wings,
As it sighs and surges and sweeps and sings;
The feathery palms and the cane-fields wide,
The dark green hills and the roaring tide,
And Honolulu.

He remembered how he had shown the lines to Carding, who had suggested that he rhyme the line ending in "coral" with, "Where the natives are dusky and not very moral." It all passed through

his mind like a flash, and then the memory reminded him of the reason why he had explored the island,—to find a place where the prisoners might be held safely.

The problem was still unsolved. Any day, their presence in this spot might be discovered. He might march them to the hills, but after his experience at the bungalow, he had his doubts as to whether there was a place sufficiently secluded for his purpose in all the island. But—ah!—"California" suggested an idea; might it not be possible to transport them to the mainland? California is as large as Oahu is small; plenty of places in California where they might be hidden and held. He would consult with Wanto. He called the Japanese.

Wanto came, stepping gingerly across the pansy beds, to take a seat on the marble bench by the side of Crane.

"Well, Wanto," the Californian began, "I've been thinking it over. We've got to decide immediately what to do with these men. Here we have quite a band of prisoners on our hands—five white men, twenty Koreans, and one Hawaiian, the keeper of the dogs. We can't keep them here much longer."

Wanto was grinning broadly, but it was because his mind was wandering from the main subject. Crane's reference to the dogs had recalled a memory to his mind—a memory of a feast which he and his comrades had enjoyed on the day after the night in the palace. The dogs had been barbecued in the most approved fashion, a fashion

the Japanese had learned from the natives. They looked back on the occasion as a red-letter day in their lives.

"These men," Crane continued, "are cunning and unscrupulous, and they were well intrenched. So far, we have captured their intrenchments. Now my plan is to hold them for a year, while I am fortifying myself where they stood. At the end of the year they'll be so delighted at the idea of getting their liberty, they'll be willing to agree to almost anything if we will only let them go. And if they do try to make any trouble, their day for accomplishing anything will have passed.

"I've been thinking it over, and I don't see any safe way to hold them in this island. But, if we could get them to California, I am sure we could hold them there as long as we please. But we can't march them down to the wharf and engage passage for them in the steamship "Nevada." Now, can you suggest a plan by which we might get them to the mainland?"

"Japanese fishing-boat," Wanto answered. "A big fishing-boat."

"I don't know," Crane demurred. "You remember that gale we had about a week ago. After the gale, five Japanese fishing-boats failed to come back."

"Yes, but they were small, two-men boats. The big boats came in. They can weather anything. And we'll need a big boat, to carry such a party as ours—twenty-six prisoners and fifteen Japanese, forty-one men in all."

"And there will be the crew besides."

"Oh, I and my men can act as crew. Some of us are old fishermen."

"Then make arrangements to purchase a boat to-day."

Events were shaping out better than the Californian would have imagined.

"Good enough," he continued. "The business ought to be easily managed. I can travel by steamer and arrange in California for your landing. But after you have landed——"

"Why, when we get to California," Wanto answered, "we can go to my brother's farm. He has a big place and he needs workmen. We could march our prisoners across country to his home. There we could hold them for a year and make them earn their keep. There would be no danger of their being discovered, for Japanese farmers are not popular in California. No Americans would intrude on his place. It would be as secluded as if it were a corner of Old Japan."

"Better and better," Crane replied; "I know something about Japanese potato-farms," and he closed his eyes while he speculated on the details of the enterprise.

Before his mind's eye there stretched a flat and featureless landscape, the central valley of California. He saw the black, fertile earth, cultivated into the mile-long ridges and furrows of a potato-farm, the ridges covered with the green vines. And in those fields he could see a group of swarthy Oriental laborers, among whom were herded the president and his associates, dressed in cheap blue cotton and covered with immense

mushroom hats. There they toiled, armed with heavy two-pronged hoes and driven to work by the rest of the gang, with whom they were compelled to keep pace. Slaves on a Japanese potato-farm! The idea was ridiculous—and tragic, too.

But the program impressed Wanto as altogether too merciful.

"Why take all this trouble?" he asked. "Why not give them Happy Despatch, and be done with them?"

"Wanto, you're only half civilized," Crane answered, "To murder men is a crime. But to deprive them of what doesn't belong to them, and to humanize them, that's different. That's justice and benevolence."

Why, on second thought, a year of hard work would probably leave them fit as football players. They'd be all the better for it, in every way. And—another point—if, after their release, they were to tell the truth about their experience and try to enlist sympathy, they would only render themselves objects of ridicule. Slaves on a potato-farm for a year! How Honolulu would roar with laughter, for we have already intimated that the officers and manager of the X Sugar Company were not popular. Their methods were considered obsolete.

The president had listened with a studied air of stony resignation to the cool discussion of his fate. Crane watched him with amusement. Mentally he contrasted the president's former state with that which was coming. No longer would

he be king of the Cosmos Club, where he might philosophise at his leisure and say the latest word on contemporary literature. No longer would he discuss poetry and popular novels within the club's cool, shaded precincts; at least, not until a year had passed. A slave on a potato-farm, herded in a bunk-house, toiling all day beneath a sun which sent the mercury above the hundred mark, how his memory would turn back to Honolulu, where he had been carried in his limousine from his Manoa valley home to his club, or to the beach at Waikiki "where the surf rolls in!"

And there was Charley Deane. How he would recall the hours he had spent loitering on the pier of the Hawaiian Yacht Club, idly watching the ripple of the trade-wind on the water blurring the reflection of the cloud-flecked blue of the sky, or letting his gaze wander to steep volcanic heights where they rose in the distance, clothed with all their exuberance of tropical verdure, and capped with clouds where rainbows played!

So it would be with the rest of them—they must give up their clubs and yachts and limousines and luxurious homes, and come down to "the simple life." But would their condition be any worse than that of a man in war-time, compelled to serve in the trenches? On the contrary, it would be a thousand times better.

"You see, Mr. President," he said, "your argument that farming is no sort or kind of work for a white man, is coming back like a boomerang to you. We'll make

farmers out of you and your associates. You'll have a chance to try, for a year at least, what you relegate to Orientals. Perhaps the experience will humanize you.

"And it seems to me that you are escaping easily enough. You must have expected, after that night in the Capitol, that we would fairly skin you alive. I'll admit the boys did get a little rough with the Koreans. But there was a great teacher once, who said, 'Do good to those who persecute you,' and that is precisely what I propose to do. However,, I do not intend to interpret that commandment in a spirit of namby-pamby mawkishness, for I don't believe that the man who took a whip of knotted cords and drove the money-changers from the temple, meant it in any such a spirit. I propose to do good to you by making good men out of you. I've decided to reform you, to humanize you, or at least to make an attempt in that direction."

And summoning the rest of the prisoners, Crane explained his plan—the year of captivity while he should be engaged in fortifying himself in their intrenchments; a year which they would spend in California as workmen on a Japanese farm. The first feature on the program would be their shipment to California by Japanese fishing-boat.

"You will hardly find the quarters in that boat as commodious as those in the Cosmos Club," he said. "But you'll have an opportunity to acquire a new outlook on life. And, so long as the voyage lasts, you'll have plenty of leisure—plenty of time on your hands, an opportunity to recuperate for

what is coming. Such a voyage should furnish you a rich fund of impressions, Mr. President, to use later in literary work. Why, you may even have a chance to perch yourself on the gunwale, note-book in hand, and write reviews of popular novels,—Jack London's, for instance."

Then for a minute the president and the Californian sat in silence, while they reflected. The same picture limned itself in the mind of each; a broad, blunt fishing-boat, of Oriental pattern, manned by a crew of swarthy Japanese. Driven by its clumsy square sail, it bobbed and dipped on the bright blue waves. And in the boat were the five "malefactors." And there were the twenty Koreans, their pale yellow faces made paler yet by seasickness. Japanese, Koreans and whites, all were huddled together, a strange crew in a strange boat, voyaging across the broad spaces of the Pacific ocean, beneath a wide blue sky where rode the scattered trade-wind clouds like puffs of smoke.

To the president that picture seemed an appalling thing, a companion-piece to a celebrated painting he remembered—a painting of "The Boat of Don Juan."

XXIV

KOKO HEAD

THE golden rays of the sun were flashing between vermilion clouds, as Crane watched the sunset from the end of a pier which projected into Honolulu harbor. Beyond the reef and over an ocean that stretched to China and Japan his eye had clear sweep. The setting sun had painted the evening sky a blaze of scarlet and gold, below which the sea lay blue and green. Like a massive disk of molten gold, the sun hung where its edge almost touched the horizon; the sky around it was as yellow as a California poppy. Then the great glowing disk slowly dissolved in the ocean, when the colors disappeared with miraculous suddenness, the low clouds turning an ashen gray. Tropical sunsets are transient affairs; their colors fade as quickly as they come.

But Crane was there with another object than to view the sunset. He had come to consult with Captain Coburn; but the captain was detained at the Agamemnon's gangplank, and the Californian must wait. He lingered in a meditative mood, for everything was conducive to meditation. The harbor was very quiet. The day's work was done. The rumble of machinery, the fussing of tow-boats, the screaming of steam-whistles, had died away.

He watched the ripple of the trade-wind on the water. As he watched it, it led him to think how essential water is to life. He remembered that water constitutes about eighty per cent of a man's weight, and that led him to think of About's "Man with the Broken Ear," who was taken while in a trance, dried in an oven, and then filed away for future reference, to be put in the bath-tub fifty years later and resuscitated as good as new.

But it occurred to Crane that the water of the ocean is salt, and therefore unsuitable to support human life; and yet, he thought, salt is a part of our food. In other words, a little salt is good, too much of it is poison. This led him to think of running water as a source of power, turning the wheels of mills, or spinning turbines far up in the mountains, whence the power is transmitted by electric wires from mountains to metropolis. And in his mind he turned back to California, remembering those long lines of grim, black skeleton towers which march across the country to carry electric power from far streams, high in the Sierras, to the communities on the shores of San Francisco bay.

"Are you dreaming of California?"

"I was doing that very thing," and Crane turned to see captain Coburn standing behind him. "California is a burning question with me, just at present. We have decided that our only course is to transfer our prisoners to the Pacific coast, and the problem is, How to do it? At

present it seems as though we must charter a Japanese fishing-boat."

From this the captain concluded that Crane was not aware of the latest developments in regard to the Agamemnon. While the Californian had been living in Manoa valley, things had been happening in Honolulu harbor. (Pardon me. Perhaps I should say, "Events had been transpiring.") The steamship Matsonia had been in a collision with a "ram-you-damn-you liner with a brace of bucking screws." (Pardon again.) The Matsonia was now in the hands of the Honolulu Iron Works for repairs, and the sugar which the Matsonia was to have carried to the mainland, lay waiting. The Agamemnon had been chartered in a hurry to carry the cargo. Consequently, on this trip, the Agamemnon would sail to San Francisco instead of to New York.

Captain Coburn conveyed this information in a few terse sentences.

"We're bound to San Francisco, this voyage," he concluded. "There we load barley for Liverpool."

Obviously the captain thought no more of two thousand miles to the Pacific coast, and of eighteen thousand miles around Cape Horn, than he did of eating a dish of Hawaiian pineapple.

Then, as became a man of few words and quick action, he pointed out the possibility of the prisoners being shipped by the Agamemnon.

"Good word, captain," Crane exulted. "This will make another time you have come to the rescue. But how will we manage it? We can't

march them down to Borneo pier and put them on board."

"Just load them into your Japanese fishing-boat, and have the boat off Diamond Head when we pass the point, outward bound. We'll pick them up."

Diamond Head! Crane had been under the impression that sailing-ships, bound from Honolulu to the mainland, ran to leeward and circled the western coast of the island. Would the captain explain?

"Most of them do," he admitted. "But the Agamemnon will steer for Diamond Head and buck through the channel, short tacks to windward."

"But, when you get to California, how about landing them? You will not be able to take them to the wharf at San Francisco."

"We'll not take them into the harbor. We'll let them go ashore at Drake's bay."

"But that will delay the ship."

"About five minutes. We'll let them use the quarter-boats. It will delay us no longer than it takes us to lower the boats."

"But suppose a gale of wind is blowing. Now is the season for northwesterners."

"The Agamemnon's boats are life-boats, non-capsizable and fitted with air-chambers."

Crane regarded the captain with increasing respect. It appeared that that resourceful seaman was equal to any emergency.

"If he had managed this affair of mine," thought Crane, "there would not have been so many

mistakes made." And then there recurred to him a question which had already arisen in his mind many times,—why did captain Coburn take so strong an interest in this affair? Why was he always ready to lend a helping hand?

"Pardon my curiosity, captain," said Crane. "While I'm tremendously thankful for your help, I can't help wondering why it is that you are always ready to help me."

"I guess you've forgotten a remark I made when first I met you on the hill. I said that you and I have a common ground of complaint against certain parties. I'm one of the minority stockholders."

"You are? Then what a fool I was not to know it!"

"Oh, we're all guilty of oversights. Yes, I put a thousand dollars into their stock, and I want to get something out of it; something more than a chance to sell out at fifty cents on the dollar. However, that isn't the only reason I'm behind you. Your methods struck my fancy, and I believe I said as much. And when I undertake to help anyone, I go my whole length."

"And I assure you that I appreciate it, captain. But, pardon me another question. How did it happen that you came to be in the Capitol that night when you rescued me?"

"I was looking for you."

"Looking for me!"

"Yes. I was in the city that morning, on ship's business. In fact, I've spent very little time in the bungalow. I thought I was going to get a

vacation, but it hasn't turned out that way. Well, as I said, I was here on ship's business, and I heard that the manager of the X plantation had been pursuing someone over the hills, the day before. They said he was using the wolf-hounds. That told me all I needed to know, and I started right out to find you and see that you got fair play, if I could accomplish it."

"You certainly turned the tables."

They went on to discuss the present situation of the prisoners and the proposed embarkation off Diamond Head.

"One suggestion from me, captain," said Crane. "Our present plan is for our fishing-boat to meet the Agamemnon at sea. We have already bought the boat. Would it not be possible for you to pick it up when it comes alongside? sling it aboard with tackles fastened to the ship's main and mizzen yard-arms. Then, when we reach the Pacific coast, we'll not need to borrow your quarter-boats. Whereas, if we abandon our boat off Diamond Head, and let it drift ashore, that very thing may lead to suspicion and inquiry."

"That's a good suggestion, Mr. Crane. I'll act on it."

"And another suggestion, captain, while I have my hand in. I imagine I know a better place to come aboard than off Diamond Head. The place I have in mind is near the southeastern end of the island, where lies a long, narrow point, running out into the sea. It is known as——"

"Koko Head."

"Precisely. It consists of a line of craters

which must have burst up through the reef, and the seaward face of one of those craters has been breached by the waves. The semi-circle which is left, forms a little bay, and on the shore of that bay there stands——”

“A club-house.”

“Yes. But I understand that that club-house has been abandoned. Now, would it not be wise to bring our fishing-boat around to that bay, and embark our prisoners there. From that point we could sail out to meet you. That part of the island is very secluded. Off Koko Head we should be much less liable to observation than if we boarded the Agamemnon off Diamond Head.”

“All right. Koko Head goes.”

They walked up the wharf together, and were about to go their separate ways, when Coburn detained the Californian with the words,

“Oh, Mr. Crane. The day after you saw me at the bungalow, you sent me a man—a Kanaka.”

“Yes. Was he any use?”

“Why, they put him to work, and the boss-stevedore tells me he worked very well until the first pay-day. Then he disappeared. The other hands thought he was a little off,—always muttering about somebody who had ill-used him.”

“Well, he said he wanted work, and I wanted him to have a chance. But I guess he’s like a lot of these natives, once the gin gets its grip on them. As soon as they earn a little money, they drink it up,” and Crane and the captain bade each other “Good night.” They would keep in touch until the day of sailing—a date which

is always an uncertain quantity when a wind-jammer is concerned.

Now commenced days of bustle and preparation behind the triple line of cocoa-palms in Manoa valley. And meanwhile, the Agamemnon was being given the quickest of "quick dispatch." The heavy brown sacks of sugar went pouring into the enormous hold. Three days later Crane was told by the captain, "We sail day after to-morrow, early in the morning."

That night the president's motor-car was in request once more. All night it was busy transporting the Japanese and their prisoners and their camp equipment, installment by installment, from Manoa valley to the southeastern end of the island. But they were not taken direct to the volcanic bay at Koko Head. No machine could run over the narrow trail which climbed those craters. For the time being, they were taken within a little valley, or deep ravine, which burrowed into the hills. Crane remembered it well, for the ridge on its eastern side was the very one where ran the trail he had descended on the day of his "capture." There, within a group of trees, the camp of the Japanese was pitched. Within it, the prisoners, securely handcuffed and bound, were guarded. They snatched a few hours' sleep. Then, after a hurried breakfast, Crane started with the majority of the Japanese for Koko Head. One man was left to oversee the captives and prevent any attempt at escape.

Two hours before noon they were climbing the volcanic slopes of Koko Head, where they would

meet Wanto and the rest of their party, who had been commissioned to bring the fishing-boat from Honolulu. Once in touch with Wanto and their effects safely on board the craft, they would return to the camp. On the following night they would transfer the prisoners to the boat. After that nothing would remain but to wait until the Agamemnon appeared around the point, when they would run out before the trade-wind, meet the square-rigger, and be hoisted on board. Then, Ho! for California.

They came to the top of the trail, where they stood on the verge of a cliff perhaps three hundred feet high, and looked down into the little bay that filled the broken crater. The inner wall rose in cliffs built of layers of volcanic rock which made the margin of the haven, surrounding nearly three quarters of a circle. The rocks were of a dark red color, formed from half molten lava and cinders fused together and hardened into stone. What a story they told of volcanic fires! The place was so wild, so lonely, and so eloquent of primitive forces and a land in the making, that it seemed almost incredible that it lay only a few miles from a modern city. But close by the shore they saw the fishing-boat lying at anchor, its sails hauled down. Wanto and his boat were on hand as per schedule. It only remained to find the trail down the cliff.

It was a narrow, break-neck track, guarded in places with chains; in places steps had been cut. But it led down the only practicable place, and at its foot stood the abandoned club-house—a low

frame cottage, painted white, with a wide verandah facing the sea. Wanto and his men sat on the verandah, smoking their perpetual cigarettes.

There ensued a discussion and minute criticism of the boat. Into its lockers were packed the effects brought from Manoa valley. By the time the party was ready to return to the camp, a glance at the sun convinced them that the hour was nearly noon. Why not eat lunch before starting?

Wanto had a supply of provisions. A meal was cooked and eaten. Then followed an hour's rest in the shade of the club-house verandah. While they rested, a program for the night was arranged.

And to-morrow! As the Californian thought of it, he walked to the margin of the little bay and looked out to sea. To-morrow they would watch the great four-master skimming over those blue waves, "bucking through the channel, short tacks to windward." To-morrow would behold them standing on the long steel deck beneath the white pyramids of sail. To-morrow they would see the volcanic peaks of Oahu sink beneath the blue horizon.

Crane and his party turned back to the camp. While they had no doubt that all was well there, they began to be in a nervous hurry to return and make sure.

They crossed the heights of Koko Head, and descended to a causeway leading over a shallow arm of the sea; they reached the highway. This they followed to a point where a trail turned into the valley where the camp had been pitched.

They stopped in the road for a moment, to drink from the canteens carried by two of their party. From where they stood they could not see the camp. Heavy algeroba trees and guava scrub were round it, concealing its presence from the outside world. But, while they waited, some of the party were glancing carelessly up the valley, in the direction of the camp. Suddenly they shaded their eyes with their hands and commenced an excited chatter.

The chatter rose to a yell. Crane dropped his canteen and turned to stare in the direction in which the Japanese were pointing. A line of men caught his attention; the men were climbing the valley-wall, which at that point was low.

Crane lifted his marine-glass. In its powerful lenses the hill-climbers were only a hundred feet away. Certainly most of them were Asiatics. But at the head of the line ran five white men, made conspicuous by their soiled suits of white duck. One of them was tall and stout; another was short, with silvery whiskers.

The prisoners were loose!! Crane counted them—twenty-seven men. Then the guard must have turned traitor!

XXV

THE CLIFF

"RIGHT after 'em, boys," Crane shouted. "It's life or death for us."

The plan of the runaways was apparent. They could not escape from the valley to the main highway—the Honolulu road,—for the Californian and his party were already at the entrance to the valley. But they could climb the hills by the trail which Crane had descended on the day of his "capture." By retracing his track, they could escape to the W plantation.

They could do it, if they were not captured first. That was the only thing which could save Crane and his men. All broke into a run as they dashed in pursuit. They must necessarily skirt the camp. As they passed it, they saw the remains of the Japanese guard. The Koreans had accounted for him.

Then who was the twenty-seventh man? No time to puzzle over that problem. Up the trail they went, gaining, gaining, all the while, for the fugitives were soft and in poor condition for hill-climbing.

The distance to the summit was not great. As the range had fallen off in altitude, it had grown narrow. Whereas behind Honolulu the distance by trail to the top was five or six miles, here it

was only two. The runaways were a scant hundred yards ahead when they reached the summit. They disappeared over the crest. The Japanese came panting in pursuit. They scrambled up the stony trail, and when they gained the summit ran across the black volcanic rocks and peered down to the plain below. Two thousand feet beneath them they saw the shadow of the great cliff, stretching jagged and gigantic across the fields of cane. The shadows were long, for the afternoon was far advanced. Immediately below the faces of the party, as they rested on hands and knees on the outermost verge of rock, there was a short slope, inclining to the left. This was the first stage of the trail. At the end of a hundred feet it apparently broke off to fall over a precipice; but Crane knew that it zig-zagged from channel to channel, keeping its grip on the front of the mountain-wall in some miraculous fashion.

Well, if the runaways could descend, so could their pursuers. But before venturing down that dizzy trail, they stopped to stretch short lengths of cord from man to man. Now they must descend. "All ready," and they balanced on the verge of the cliff for a moment, before trusting their limbs and lives to the break-neck track below them.

At that very moment a movement at the end of the "hundred feet of trail" caught Crane's eye. A battered straw hat, minus a crown, appeared above the rocks. Its owner scrambled into view. They recognized the Hawaiian beggar.

So he was the twenty-seventh man! And had

all of the runaways lost their nerve? Were they returning rather than risk the descent?

But no one followed the Hawaiian. Slowly and shame-facedly he climbed to the place where Crane and his party were standing. He appeared to be under an intense nervous strain. Although they questioned him closely, his account was so disconnected as to be barely intelligible. And in his excitement he could express himself only in his native tongue, which the Japanese understood but poorly.

They paused to hear the Hawaiian's story. What a scene and what a setting! For a stage there was the summit of that huge volcanic rock in mid-ocean—a narrow rock-platform, barely a dozen feet in width. On one side stood the group of Japanese, fingering their cane-knives. Before them the Hawaiian balanced on the edge of the precipice. Behind him spread the stupendous panorama of cane-fields and sandy shore and coral reef and distant, dark blue ocean, sparkling beneath the trade-wind. There stood the man, his rags fluttering in the gentle wind, while he half shouted a torrent of his native Hawaiian.

He stood facing the west, where the sun, almost on the point of setting, hovered above the rim of the world. Its level rays glared on his face. With waving arms, his eyes rolling, he was pointing, to the rocks, to the precipice, and behind him to the plain below. He was telling how he had wandered into the camp, where his services had been impressed as a guide over the old native trail. He was saying that, in trying to guide the

party down the cliff, he "had made a mistake." The result had been that the president and his party had fallen over a cliff a thousand feet high. That much was certain. But how the mistake had occurred was not at all clear. And how the prisoners had got loose, the man did not know.

Crane had his own opinion as to how the mistake had happened, but it was not for him to accuse the man. A few of the Japanese were sent down the trail with the Hawaiian to confirm what he said. They descended to the point where he claimed the party had gone over the cliff, and came back, corroborating his story.

"Then the next thing to do," said Crane, "is to report the accident to the high sheriff of Hawaii," and he turned to the Hawaiian.

"You must make the report. Our work is done. But, Wanto, take this man to Honolulu and see that he reports to the high sheriff, and see that he doesn't report too much. However, there is no real danger from him. He knows very little."

For a moment Wanto was inclined to demur.

"Oh, it's all right," said Crane. "We had nothing to do with this accident. We were not with the runaways when it occurred. As the situation now stands, we are absolved from all responsibility."

Wanto called one of his men. Between them they hurried the Hawaiian down the trail to the Honolulu road. To be brief, the man made his report to the high sheriff, was detained for a few days as a witness, and then released.

After Wanto had gone, Crane delayed on the

hill for a few minutes, resting there on the volcanic rocks.

"Our work is over," he repeated. Then he asked the Japanese whether they still wished to go to California. They assured him that they did.

"Then you will sail in the *Agamemnon*," he answered. "You will carry out the program we arranged, except that there will be no prisoners to guard.

He himself would return to the city, where he would take passage in the next steamer for the mainland. Still he delayed, while he thought of the "prisoners."

He thought of them all: the president, with his fondness for philosophising; Frank Atten, with his expansive waist-measure and his genial smile; Charley Deane, the immaculate; the manager, with his ability to drive; Carding, a promising young fellow, in spite of his occasional boyish blunders. All of them had possessed qualities which placed them well above the average. All of them had belonged to the "responsible citizen" class. And yet all had perished miserably, and at the hands of a beggar. What was the reason? What common failing did they possess, which had led them on to their own destruction.

The answer was easy. Selfishness, greed, grasping shortsightedness, the desire to exploit their fellow-men rather than to serve and to create; methods which succeed only when employed against those who have not the courage to resent them.

They had gotten the money of the California

stockholders; that is, the money had put them in possession of a magnificent piece of property; and they had proposed to repay the Californians by giving them a chance to sell out for half the sum they had invested. As a result, the Californians had taken the plantation from them.

They had defrauded the Japanese of one day's pay, and had put them on the blacklist, and by so doing had driven the Japanese desperate, until they were ready for any enterprise.

They had defrauded captain Coburn, but the result had been that at the two critical moments when it seemed as though they had the Californians and the Japanese beaten, Coburn had put them back.

And finally, when through Crane's over-confidence and his carelessness in leaving them inadequately guarded, they had won their liberty and a last chance to turn the tables for good and all, they had lost their lives through the very man whom they had made a beggar and a butt. And they had lost their lives because they had made him a beggar and a butt.

So Crane reviewed the situation in his mind, and as he did so, he thought with contempt of those who hold that "virtue is its own reward," and that chicanery is the only thing that pays.

Now the sun, like a broad red target, touched the rim of the western horizon. As Crane prepared to descend the hill, he thought of the day when he had watched Sherrill's aeroplane from those very heights.

"I'll have quite a story to tell the lieutenant," he thought, and he wondered absently what the lieutenant was doing.

As a matter of fact, at that moment the officer was closely engaged with very important business, the particulars of which "will follow immediately."

XXVI

MARJORIE BURL

BELOW the walls of Diamond Head, and about four miles from Honolulu harbor, there lies a public park. The steep red sides of the crater overlook the lawns and lakes and winding avenues where peacocks spread their plumes and scream beneath the trees. And near that park there is a wonderful aquarium, which is reckoned as one of the sights of the city.

It is a cave-like place. Within it a deep twilight reigns. The light filters through the tanks in which the fish are swimming—the gorgeous fish of the tropics, sky-blue and rose and salmon-pink, while others display their zebra stripes of black and yellow. Their colors are gorgeous, their forms are fantastic, their tone is the exotic tone of the torrid zone.

It was to this aquarium that Miss Burl and her brother came on the afternoon of that day. And there it was that lieutenant Sherrill came, not five minutes after their arrival. Possibly, on the evening before, the young lady may have hinted her plans. Never, in the lieutenant's opinion, would it do for her to visit a place so near Fort Ruger without a guide. And there was a question which his wished to ask.

The lieutenant did not wear his white uniform, with its glittering shoulder-straps and braid, of the night in the palace. Fresh from aeroplane practice, he was in khaki.

Side by side, he and Marjorie Burl made the rounds of the dim halls. But the young lady's enjoyment was marred a little by the fact that there were no chairs in the aquarium.

"There is a rest-house in the park," the lieutenant told her; "let me take you there. It's not five minute's walk from here. Later in the afternoon the regiment will be on dress-parade in the aviation-field. Perhaps you will enjoy seeing that."

They walked across the road and into the park, to where the rest-house stood beneath a group of banyan trees. And there they rested in a pair of deep wicker chairs.

One side of the room was a great arched window rising from the floor, its glass panels swinging on hinges out over a balcony. Flung wide open, it afforded a view down an avenue bordered by algeroba trees—the trees leading for a hundred yards to the margin of a little lake, where a grove of cocoa-palms grew on the edge of the water. Avenue and water and palms and bright blue sky, foam-flecked with feathery clouds, blended into a single harmonious effect. Its frame was the arch of the window.

For a while they lingered in the tea-room, admiring the perfect picture before them. Then they rose and walked down the avenue until they stood on the margin of the water. The little lake was very small, no larger than a pond. Lilies

by hundreds slept on its surface. From the opposite shore, where the cocoa-palms waved their graceful fronds in the fragrant air, a marble summer-house gleamed at them out of the shade.

Marjorie Burl and the officer circled the lily-pond and entered the summer-house. Semi-circular in shape, it was wide open in front, with a floor of blue tiles and a wall in eight panels, and from those panels the roof sloped upward to a point. Each panel was white marble—marble through which there drifted green streaks and veins. A great splash of color was lent by a crimson velvet pillow where it lay on the deep leather cushion that covered a low stone bench.

Marjorie Burl took a place on the low stone bench. She made a lovely picture,—try to image it; the tall girl, all white, with a light blue ribbon around her blond hair, sitting on the yellow leather cushion before a background of green-veined marble. On her left arm she carried a bouquet of red rosebuds, glowing in a profusion of green leaves. In her right hand she held a book of verse.

"May I ask whose verses you have been reading?" the lieutenant inquired.

"They are John Masefield's," she replied. "Some of his lines have simply fascinated me, they are so very appropriate to these islands. Here he gives a picture of a ship arriving in port, a great ship which has stormed around Cape Horn,

"To come after long months, at rosy dawn,
Into the placid blue of some smooth bay,
Treading the quiet water like a fawn

Ere yet the morning haze was blown away,
A rose-flushed figure, putting aside the gray,
And anchoring there before the city smoke
Rose, or the church-bells rang or men awoke."

She was reading with such a captivating play of rosy lips and white teeth and sparkling gray eyes, he found her face a more fascinating study than any verse. She continued,

"And then in the first light to see grow clear
That long-expected haven, filled with strangers,
Alive with men and women; see and hear
Its clattering market and its money-changers;
And hear the surf beat and be free from dangers,
And watch the crinkled ocean blue with calm
Drowsing beneath the Trade, beneath the palm."

"He surely must have had Honolulu harbor in mind when he wrote that," said Sherrill.

The lieutenant had remained standing while she read, perhaps because it gave him a better opportunity to watch her. How he loved to study the smooth oval of her face and her rounded chin! Could any artist shape curves more lovely? He was sure it would be impossible.

Could their surroundings have been more romantic? From the neighboring shore there drifted toward them a low rumble, the roll of the surf on the reef. Otherwise, the soft rustling of palm-branches was the only sound that reached the ear. All around them the fragrance of vanilla floated in the air,—the soft, warm, langorous air of the tropics. While Marjorie had been reading John Masefield's lines, some lines of Shakespeare had occurred to Sherrill:—"There is

a tide in the affairs of men," and so forth. He decided that the time had come for him. He took the tide. And his venture prospered.

No interruption came until they had finished settling it all, between them, to their own complete satisfaction. Then they heard the triumphant swell of military music. A regiment was at dress-parade, on the oval of the aviation-field. The clear calls of the bugles came on the breath of the trade-wind, followed by the crash of the military band. The El Capitan march rang out. It seemed to celebrate their bliss, to blend with the very spirit of their hour.

They sat side by side on that low stone bench, and they talked of the evening when first they had met, and they traced their acquaintanceship down to that very minute. He told her how he had loved her ever since he first saw her—a tall girl, all in white, with a light blue ribbon around her blond hair—crossing the hotel parlor.

"In a way, I owe my happiness to Mr. Crane," he said, "for it was through him we met."

And then they went on to make plans for the future. The lieutenant's dreams were very rosy. All men talk soft nonsense on occasion, and Sherrill was no exception to the rule. He suggested a tour around the world.

"Imagine us drifting in rickshaws along the tree-shaded paths of Old Japan, or yachting in the harbors of Australia; wandering among the ruins of almighty Rome, or leaning on a bridge which spans the Arno."

Marjorie let him talk, but then she said,

"What you suggest is very delightful, but—I have just completed one journey around the world. Wouldn't it be more delightful still to spend our honeymoon right here in the Paradise of the Pacific?"

Of course she was right, and instantly the lieutenant's dreams took a new direction.

"We will sail away to the Garden Island, a hundred miles over there," and he pointed. "We'll charter a little steamer for our own exclusive use."

"It will be our yacht." Her gray eyes were sparkling.

"And in the Garden Island I can show you a thousand delicious tropical pictures, all of them different from those of this island, and all of them delightful." The sparkle in his eyes matched the light in hers.

"We'll find no cities like Honolulu, I suppose."

"Instead, we'll discover a dozen little towns, scattered along the shore, dreaming beneath their palm trees."

"Splendid! We'll make our home in the boat, and go coasting from port to port, and drifting from village to village."

"We'll linger in each place as long as we please, and then go on to the next."

"We'll ascend the tropical valleys!"

"Yes, indeed; and walk on the banks of the winding streams," and he grew poetical. "From beneath the palms we'll watch the shores of sunlit bays where the blue waves ripple to a beach of coral sand."

Just then there came to his mind the favorite lines of the late president of the Cosmos Club:

"Long-crested waves that haste to reach
And perish on a snow-white beach;
A shining shallop, trim and frail,
Borne down upon the spicy gale;
Two lovers on the ocean vast—
Two lovers loving well at last
Within the shadow of the sail."

He quoted the lines to Marjorie, and the talk rambled on until the time came when he must return her to the hotel.

They planned to meet again that evening in another of Honolulu's parks, where the Territorial Band, once the Royal Hawaiian, would give an open-air concert. Marjorie Burl came with her parents. Professor and Mrs. Burl had been pleased to bestow their most gracious approval upon the engagement. In fact, they had seen for some days how the tide was running.

Lieutenant Sherrill came, to saunter by Marjorie's side, or to sit with her on a park bench. And there came Kenneth Crane. He saw the lieutenant and his charming companion, and hurried forward, his hand extended, to offer congratulations, for he knew what had occurred. The officer had called him up by telephone that evening.

But the bandmaster tapped on his stand. All took their places to listen to the next selection. It was one known as the "Moorish Patrol." It portrayed the passing of a troop of Moorish

cavalry. The music began so softly that scarcely could it be heard. There was a faint hum in the air, a hum which was broken by a distant jingle. Slowly and steadily the jingle grew. The volume of sound was always increasing and building. The patrol was approaching. Now it was passing. The audience could almost see the black Arabian horses, spurning the earth with their prancing feet; the dark faces and flowing robes and snowy turbans of the riders; their long lances and curving swords. Their cavalry band was in full swing, crashing out a melody which was supposed to be the wild, barbaric music of the Moors.

How the cymbals and triangle crashed and jingled! But already the music was beginning to soften. The patrol had passed by. It was receding in the distance. With a last little "zing" it died away.

But, as Crane listened with lowered eyelids, the music seemed to him to portray, not so much the passing of a Moorish patrol, as his own experiences of the last three weeks.

He saw himself landing in Honolulu, enchanted by its tropical charm, and looking around while he decided what was best to be done. Then he saw his plans taking definite shape. He saw himself coming to hand-grips with the enemy; complication building on complication. He saw himself pursued by dogs, hunted over the island, dragged to the Torture Chamber; then freed as by magic, his enemies once more in his power. Then he remembered those anxious hours in Manoa valley, when he planned a way out. To-day,

the last complication had been swept aside. The last echoes of the strife were dying away.

It had been an audacious experiment, full of the clash of wits, the excitement of the chase, suspense and thrill. And he had come through triumphantly,—but had lost all the skin on his teeth in the coming. It occurred to him that he would stop and think—think a long time, before he started out again to “reform and humanize” any of his fellow-citizens.

Then he thought of what he had said to the president, as to the value of co-operation. He thought how hopeless his own situation would have been, had he not had the co-operation of lieutenant Sherrill and captain Coburn.

There was the captain, now, accompanied by his two mates, and followed by the men of the *Agamemnon*. The captain, his men, and his mates were there for an evening ashore.

Coburn came, to take lieutenant Sherrill's hand and add his congratulations to those of Crane. There was an intermission of ten minutes between the first and second parts of the program. The time was fully occupied with conversation and the expression of good wishes. Crane contrived to whisper to the captain that the villains of the play, through their own folly, were all of them gone “where the wicked cease from troubling.” But the Japanese would sail in the *Agamemnon*. Then the band struck up a lively dancing measure, and all settled themselves to listen to the music.

Half an hour later the concert was over. Crane, the Burls, and Sherrill crowded around captain

Coburn to bid him farewell, for they knew that the Agamemnon would sail in the morning.

"We have a long voyage before us," said captain Coburn. "As soon as we have discharged cargo at San Francisco, we load barley for Liverpool."

They wished him "fair winds and a prosperous voyage around Cape Horn."

"Captain," said Crane, "I'd like to thank your men personally for what they did for me."

Coburn gave the command,

"Line up, boys."

The men fell into line. Probably their order was not so perfect as that of a regiment on dress-parade, but—no matter. Crane walked down the line, thanking the men. When he had exchanged grips with the last of the Norwegians, he felt as though he should not care to do any more handshaking that day. Then another notion occurred to him.

"Please hold your men a moment, captain," he said, and he hurried to the bandstand. The musicians were descending the steps. They numbered twenty-five. In 1913 the band was less flamboyant than it had been in the days of the monarchy. It boasted only one base-drum and one French helicon. Crane addressed the leader.

"I want to tell you that I have enjoyed the music immensely."

"Yah."

"And I should like to encourage your band with a little donation." Five twenties were transferred from Crane's vest-pocket to the fingers

of the bandmaster. "All I want in return is that you furnish the music for a procession to the pier. We will arrange it in a minute. The Agamemnon sails to-morrow morning. Captain Coburn and his crew are here. They are all ready to march."

"Sehr goot! Sehr goot!" and the leader turned to his men. "Poys, von minute. Dis shentleman here wants us to march to der pier to gif farewell to captain Coburn and der men of der Agamemnon. Dis shentleman has yoost made donation of one hundert tollar to der bant. And, poys, efery cent of de money goes mit you! Poys, vill ve lead de procession? Vill ve hoop it up?"

Did they respond? Would they come? Why, they were ready to lead the way to the middle of Honolulu harbor!

In a twinkling the plan had been explained to captain Coburn and the procession had been formed. Lieutenant Sherrill and Majorie Burl stood arm in arm to watch them march away.

They saw the procession threading its way through the park. Behind the band came Crane and the captain, arm in arm; then the mates, and then the seamen. The sailors were skipping along, rollicking from side to side, and singing as they went, for the tune that the band was thundering out was the El Capitan march.

As they listened to those glorious strains, lieutenant Sherrill looked at Marjorie Burl and Marjorie Burl looked at lieutenant Sherrill. Once more they seemed to stand in the marble summer-house beneath the palms. Once more the music

seemed to celebrate their bliss, to blend with the very spirit of their hour.

Again they turned to look at the procession. They saw it march between the trees, out of the park and out of their lives. They heard the strains of the band and the songs of the seamen roaring away into the distance. They sympathized with Crane's triumph. But his impromptu celebration appealed to them a hundred times more when they thought that it was through him that they had met; it was from his visit to Honolulu they might date their own happiness.

XXVII

AT HOME IN THE TROPICS

A YEAR later. Once more the volcanic slopes of Diamond Head rise before us, for we are afloat on the Pacific ocean, steering toward the harbor of Honolulu, although the harbor is not yet in sight.

The day is bright and breezy, and inspiring with the rush of the trade-wind and the roll of the crested seas, for it is the month of April, when the winds and the season are settled. A golden sun pours its beams down upon the blue and white of the Pacific. From the shore comes the long roar of the surf, the breakers booming on the reef in regular sequence.

Once more Crane stood on the deck of the steamship "Nevada" and let his gaze linger on the scenes which passed before him, watching the shore of the green tropical island, the fringe of cocoa-palms, and the surf foaming over the coral. He could see the fields of the W plantation, and Diamond Head where lay the military aviation-field, and the long volcanic slopes that rose between them to break off at the cliff where all the trouble had come to an end. Everything reminded him of his experience a year before.

Presently the "Nevada" rounded Diamond Head.

Swinging around the point, swinging into the glowing panorama of surf and sunshine and shore which had charmed Crane on the morning of his first arrival, the steamship slid past the beach at Waikiki "where the surf rolls in," anchored for the quarantine inspection, and then steamed into Honolulu harbor and up to the Oceanic pier.

There was the same crowd on the pier to meet the steamer—ladies in white linen dresses, flower-sellers, newsboys. But when Crane landed he found no conveyance waiting for him. He hurried to the telephone-booth, where he learned that he should have to wait an hour for the carriage that would take him to his home. He whiled away the time by walking to the breakwater which guards the southern side of the entrance to Honolulu harbor.

The place was a quarter of a mile from the trees which shaded the city. His eye had clear sweep across their tops, and up to the head of the valley behind Honolulu. Above the hills the clouds were gathering. He watched them roll together and come charging down the valley, breaking into mist and showers as they came. He saw a glorious rainbow span the great gorge. Then the clouds cleared, and for a minute all was blue above the pass. Another minute, and over the mighty V at its upper end the mists were forming from clear air. Again the clouds came rolling down, accompanied by rain and rainbows. But mists and showers never escaped from the valley. All the while, above the shore where Crane was standing, the clear sky glowed

intensely blue and the golden sunlight poured unchecked on sand and palms and sea.

What a land to live in!! And his eye instinctively sought the slopes of Tantalus, for there was his new home.

Tantalus? We must tell where it is.

Two miles away he saw the seaward face of the hills, and at their feet, resting against their toes, the old volcanic cone of Punchbowl, brown and rusty. Behind it a broad and easy slope rose, green and tree-covered, climbing slowly toward a loftier crater, perched high in the hills. The crater's rim overtopped the plain by two thousand feet. It was known as Tantalus.

Far up those slopes were colonies of delightful homes. We may have given the impression that the hills near Honolulu were quite deserted; and that was true where the heights were climbed only by rough cattle-trails. But it was not true of Tantalus. Ascend those long slopes and you could find scores of pretty suburban homes, set in splashes of flamboyant vegetation. Especially did they nestle at the foot of the crater itself, fifteen or sixteen hundred feet above the plain.

Presently Crane had entered the carriage and was ascending the long slope. As the carriage followed the sweeping zig-zags of the road, he scanned anew the evidences pointing to the former fiery history of the island. He saw hills which had been covered with volcanic dust and cinders. He saw gigantic cliffs, built of dark volcanic rock, layer on layer. He saw extinct craters above and below. He caught hints of the days

when fire had flamed from the crests of the hills, when red-hot ashes had rained from the sky, when roaring billows of white-hot lava rolled to the plain. But those suggestions were eclipsed by the peaceful beauty of to-day. Nearly everywhere, all had been covered with a profusion of tropical verdure. The volcanic rocks only peeped out through their mantle of grass and trees and bushes. Crest and crater were bright in the tropical light, which gleamed on their enamel of green.

Back and forth, back and forth, higher and higher, climbed the road, through the forest until it came to the foot of the Tantalus crater. Here it turned to the right, to wind in and out among minor elevations. Native trees, koa and kukui, shaded it on either side. Then it ended abruptly before a gate.

Crane and his companion left the carriage and passed through the gate and walked down a private way for perhaps a hundred yards, along a green lane that was lined with stakes which had been driven into the earth. All of them were leafing out. Each post and picket was bursting into foliage. It was Robinson Crusoe's hedge come true.

At the end of the lane his home stood before him. Before it there stretched a sumptuous garden. With its hedge of purple hibiscus, its clusters of feathery acacias, and its broad beds of golden poppies, the garden glittered like a jewel-casket. He lingered for a moment to dwell on the scene.

His eye followed a yellow path which curved through the lawn. A granite pedestal stood by the side of the path, and on the pedestal a granite urn, and from the curving edge there hung a dark green vine, spattered with blossoms of the deepest red. Above the vine rose a double circle of flowering plants, a blaze of red and blue. In the very center a Japanese tiger-lily nodded, with its long brown stamens and its petals of pink and white.

But the flowers were not what caught Crane's eye, charming though they were. At the foot of the pedestal there played three beautiful children. The eldest—a boy of five—staggered to lift the broad leaf of a banana-palm. His two little sisters raised their chubby arms to help him hold it level. Side by side, all three walked in line, shaded by the great, umbrella-like leaf.

Crane's eye dwelt with affection and pride on that group for he knew those children as his own. Like a sensible man, he had married young, five years before his first trip to the Islands. Otherwise, it would have been open to grave doubt whether the proposal beneath the cocoa-palms, which we recorded in the preceding chapter, would have been made by Sherrill or by Crane.

It was his wife who had brought the carriage to the pier. It was his wife who now was standing at his side, admiring with him the group on the lawn.

The youngsters were so pre-occupied with their improvised sunshade, that for a minute they did not know they were observed. Then they saw

their father and they threw the leaf aside and ran to meet him.

He lifted the smallest child in his arms, and led the way into a home that was a tropical idyl. The entrance was behind the triple archway of a portico. As its owner entered it, he looked around him with pardonable pride.

The wide doors of the portico opened into a square court, a cool and shady retreat. The place was a bower of beauty. In the center there grew a little jungle of green palms and graceful tree-ferns, sheltering a fountain where the water dripped and fell with a pleasant splash and tinkle. There were tasteful stands of flowers and ferns all around the margin of the brick pavement. The cream-colored walls were half covered with a green trellis and broken by arches. In the apex of each arch was a picture wrought in stained glass—typical Hawaiian landscapes, the colors flaming as beneath a blazing tropic sun. A group of bronze statuary stood at the far end of the room—three surf-board riders racing through the surf. The young men threw their arms wide as they stood erect, balancing on the boards. A fourth swam between them. With parted lips and eager eyes and tense muscles, they depicted the very spirit of the sport.

But the party did not linger in the court, enchanting though it was. They passed through one of the archways, where a door gave entrance to a hall leading to the verandah—or “lanai” as the Hawaiians call it.

Coming from garden and courtyard the trans-

ition was as startling as a transformation scene. In the garden all had been seclusion. Surrounded by its sheltering trees, there had been no hint of the fact that the place was balanced on the edge of a cliff, below which the hills fell away so steeply that it seemed as though the lanai was poised in mid-air. From a height of fifteen hundred feet they gazed out into space.

They were looking down into Manoa valley. Fifteen hundred feet below them lay the valley-floor, for they stood on the very verge of the valley-wall, at the place where it was steepest—the Manoa pali. They looked right down on a mighty checker-board made up of square miles of tiny taro-patches; the descent was so steep that it seemed as if one might toss a pebble down among them. There lay the fields—their bright, luxuriant green illuminated by a brilliant tropical sun, while the trade-wind rippled over them, wave following wave as the leaves bent before it.

And beyond that valley they saw rice-fields stretching almost to the palm-shaded beach of Waikiki. They could lean on the railing and look down on the distant shore and watch the gorgeous panorama around them—a panorama of green hills and waving trees and bright blue sky where sailed white fleets of clouds that went drifting always toward the west, to build great mountain-ranges of pearl and alabaster along the far horizon.

Such is the home of the new president of the X Sugar Company, and such is the view from his verandah. From the plain far below the home

can be seen, poised on the outermost verge of a shoulder of the hills, its white sides reflecting the brightness of the western sun, while for background there rise the deep blue of the sky and the deep green of the crater-wall. A group of *Poinciana Regia* half surround the house with their masses of gorgeous scarlet, showing at a distance like a flock of gigantic flamingoes. They suggested a name for the place. Crane calls it "The Flamingo's Nest."

It is not true that all Hawaiian sugar-planters live as luxuriously and delightfully as this. In fact, some of them claim they have hard work to live at all. But remember that the X Sugar plantation is a most productive estate, and Crane, as president of the company, shares its prosperity.

From his verandah he loves to overlook Honolulu harbor, where under his initiative double lines of cocoa-palms have been planted from breakwater to breakwater to relieve the commercial foreground of wharves and the commercial background of warehouses. Before the warehouses lie the deep-sea freighters and ocean liners, their hoarse bellowings rising now and then to Tantalus, though usually the trade-wind carries such sounds out to sea. And beyond the bay lies a marvelous view over a blue sea, where he sees the white fringe of surf which marks the reef, and beyond the reef the green of the shallow water shading to the ultramarine of the ocean, the great globe-girdling ocean which stretches to the ends of the earth. Across that ocean come great steamships from Australia and China and

Japan and the Isthmus of Panama, to fill their holds with the heavy brown sacks of sugar.

What a lot of happiness a man can extract from life when he takes a genuine delight and a keen pleasure in simply seeing the beauty and grace and charm, and the wonder and majesty and magnificence, which fill the world all around him!

Not that it is all heaven, even in the Paradise of the Pacific! Indeed, when Crane organized an excursion of the two hundred California stockholders and their wives and families to Honolulu, some of them claimed to find, instead of heaven, its very reverse. To many, the sultry tropical climate is oppressive in the extreme.

And the thoughtful reader may suggest that there are possibilities of a more serious drawback to life in the Hawaiian Islands, than a sultry climate. In a land where once "fire flamed from the crests of the hills, red-hot ashes rained from the sky, and roaring billows of white-hot lava rolled to the plain," is there not a possibility of the recurrence of such phenomena? One may imagine the Honolulu papers publishing extras to announce "a stupendous and amazing lava-flow in the great island of Hawaii!" Here come the newsboys, shouting the "Advertiser." "Extra! Extra! The city of Hilo buried beneath a thousand feet of flaming lava!" Then, on the next day, there follow excursions by inter-island steamer to the scene, where a mighty river of molten rock is pouring into the ocean, raising it to the boiling point for square miles. But, as a matter of fact, Hawaiian volcanoes are either

extinct or dying. Volcanic outbursts are becoming mild and few, even in the "big island" of Hawaii.

Hawaii! there is a fascination in the name! It calls up fancies of flying-fish and sapphire seas and gorgeous flowers and jungles soaked alternately in tropical sunshine and tropical showers; of dark blue skies where drift the trade-wind clouds, and glorious moonlit nights, nights made perfect by the moonlight of the tropics, when the great moon hangs aloft like a golden globe and bathes the landscape in its golden rays. On the verandahs they are dancing to the swing of a native orchestra which blends its music with the plash of the rolling surf. Far out on the reef the boys are riding their surf-boards. With whoop and halloo they come racing toward the shore. Hawaii! land of sugar-cane, coral and waving groves of cocoa-palms.

Such is the land where to-day the hero of our island-drama dwells,—where he loves to entertain his friends from the mainland when they see fit to voyage across the ocean. He takes them to his Tantalus home—The Flamingo's Nest. He leads them into the cool courtyard, where they may rest in huge wicker chairs by the side of the fern-shaded fountain. He stretches himself in another wide wicker chair, between the tree-ferns and the bronze pedestal where stands the statue of the surf-board riders. And there he chants the charms of island-life in the Paradise of the Pacific.

THE END











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